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Medium Aevum

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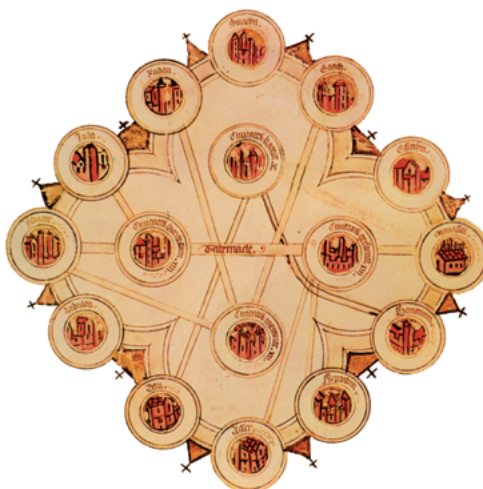
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I PART

THE PAST INTERROGATED AND UNMASKED



BATTLE IN THE MEDIEVAL IBERIAN PENINSULA: 11TH TO 13TH CENTURY CASTILE-LEON. STATE OF THE ART

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ABSTRACT

Since the 19th century, the analysis of planning and execution of battles, tactics and strategies in Castile-Leon during the High Middle Ages had been in the hands of professional militia and was strongly influenced by positivist assumptions. Starting in the 1970s, the gradual extension of major historiographical currents —mainly *Annales* and Marxism— which were highly focused on socio-economic aspects, at Spanish universities, along with certain political prejudices existing at that time, kept these topics on the periphery of professional medievalism interests. Only starting in the mid-'90s would a renewal in these fields begin to come about, with influences from English-speaking and French historiography, which has made it possible to bring this subject into the academic mainstream at the present time.¹

KEYWORDS

Medieval war, Tactics, Strategies, Castile-Leon, Central Middle Ages, State of the art.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Bellum mediaevale, Res militares, Strategiae, Castella et Legio, Centralis Medium Aevum, Status quaestionis.

1. A society organised for war

An analysis of the historical evolution of the Christian kingdoms on the Peninsula during the Middle Ages highlights a reality that is hard to deny: in all of them, war had become an innate element of society, which had to adapt its structures, means of organisation and relational mechanisms to the constant demands of omnipresent military conflict. This panorama is so wide-spread amongst scholars that it is now commonplace to assert that medieval Iberian societies were 'societies organised for war', to use the highly successful expression coined by Elena Lourie in 1966 to refer to the Hispanic world.²

Of course, this consideration could also be extended to the entire medieval period of peninsular history and to all its kingdoms, but there is no doubt that the frequency, intensity and relevance of the armed conflicts did not remain steady throughout the entire period, nor were all the societies on the peninsula equally affected or dependent on the 'phenomenon of war' to the same extent. In this regard, it can be asserted that Castile-Leon—taken either as a unified kingdom or as two distinct political entities—experienced events between the 11th and 13th centuries that make it a particularly interesting and exceptional subject of study for the analysis of war and of the historiography that has developed in recent decades regarding this phenomenon. However, it cannot be ignored that the other Christian kingdoms on the peninsula also experienced similar historical circumstances and that many of the historiographical trends discussed in this paper, referring specifically to Leon and Castile, could also be applied, with certain clarifications, to those other entities.³

As Georges Duby pointed out, western European civilisation as a whole in that period, from the 11th to the 13th century, was *toute entière dominée par le fait*

1. This paper was written within the framework of research projects: *Las selecciones de discursos historiográficos desde la antigüedad hasta el renacimiento II: función retórica e historiográfica, fortuna literaria e influencia ideológica* (FFI2012-31813) and *Génesis y desarrollo de la guerra santa cristiana en la Edad Media del Occidente Peninsular (ss. X-XIV)* (HAR2012-32790), funded by the Ministry of the Economy and Competitiveness of the Government of Spain, and is part of the activities of Research Group Arenga from the University of Extremadura (HUM023) in the catalogue of Research Groups of the Region of Extremadura. The first version of the paper was given as a presentation at the *I Symposium Internacional. La conducción de la guerra (950-1350). Historiografía*, held in Cáceres from 18 to 20 November 2008. Although the organisers of that meeting agreed to publish the works presented, in fact, by mid-2015, they had not yet been published. As one might imagine, seven years later, some of the references and conclusions stated there have become obsolete or overcome, and therefore certain information has been updated in this text.

2. Lourie, Elena. "A society organized for war: Medieval Spain". *Past and Present*, 35 (1966): 54-76. Years later, the expression would be taken literally by: Powers, James F. *A Society Organized for War. The Iberian Municipal Militias in the Central Middle Ages, 1000-1284*. Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1988. More than a few authors have repeated the same idea.

3. This is the case of the Kingdom of Aragon, whose historiography on war seems to have followed similar trends to that of Castile-Leon: Orsi, Mario. "La guerra en la Corona de Aragón (siglos XIII-XV). Aproximación metodológica a través de su historiografía", *VI Jornadas Luso-espanholas de Historia Medieval: A Guerra e a Sociedade na Idade Média*. Torres Novas: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos Medievais-Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2009: I, 551-571; Orsi, Mario. "La Història Militar de la Corona d'Aragó a la Baixa Edat Mitjana: passat, present i futur". *Ex novo: revista d'història i humanitats*, 7 (2011): 181-201.



militaire,⁴ but in the context dealt with here, one can see that, in addition to a level of conflict comparable with that of the rest of the West — wars between kingdoms or monarchies, dynastic disputes, clashes between monarchy and nobility or amongst members of the nobility — there was a specific type of conflict that makes the bellicosity of medieval Iberian societies as a whole distinct from those of the rest of Europe: the war against Islam.

For some time now, historians have been highlighting the notion that the ongoing conflict with the Muslims had a profound effect on the features of these communities. The influence of war and military expansion at the expense of the Islamic community on the peninsula, on every aspect of their lives, has been pointed out repeatedly: in the political organisation of the kingdoms and the creation of strong monarchies through leadership that was belligerent to the Muslims; in the classic feudal institutions, whose growth was stunted precisely by the power that the kings held as a result of their central position in war and in the military organisation of the kingdoms; in the creation of the noble elite, who found, in the fight against the Muslims, a way of life and a purpose that justified their dominance; in the creation of a highly permeable society thanks to the possibilities for moving up in rank and the changes caused by border conflict; in economic structures and activities, the development of which was closely associated with the gains and losses resulting from war activities; in the creation of a unique mentality, ideology and religious sensitivity that not only converted armed anti-Islamic conflict into a form of piety, but also acted as the foundation for historical, legal and sanctified grounds — the ideology of the Reconquista — to justify the destruction of Muslim political powers on the Iberian Peninsula. In this regard, although numerous authors and titles could be listed, for merely illustrative purposes, it would suffice to recall how Sánchez Albornoz, in the mid-20th century, did not hesitate to identify the creation of an alleged Hispanic essentiality, which of the *homo hispanicus*, based precisely on *la acción de la multiseccular pugna con el Islam*.⁵

Disregarding Albornoz's 'essentialism', it is indeed true that war in medieval Hispania arises constantly as an essential feature in understanding its historical realities. In fact, twenty years after the great historian from Avila so emphatically stressed *las proyecciones históricas de esa larga y compleja empresa [la guerra contra los musulmanes] en la cristalización de muy variadas facies de vivir hispano*,⁶ Angus Mackay would return to the same idea, this time highlighting the extraordinary influence that the frontiers with Al-Andalus would have in the configuration of the peninsular societies:

4. "entirely dominated by the military concept". Duby, George. "Guerre et Société dans l'Europe féodale: Ordonnement de la Paix", *Concetto, Storia, Miti e Immagini del Medio Evo*, Vittore Branca, ed. Florence: Sansoni Editori, 1973: 449.

5. "action of the centuries-old struggle against Islam". Sánchez Albornoz, Claudio. *España, un enigma histórico*. Barcelona: Edhasa, 1991: 1263 (The first edition dates back to 1956).

6. "the impact on history of that long and complex enterprise [the war against the Muslims] in the crystallisation of a wide variety of facets of the Hispanic experience". Sánchez Albornoz, Claudio. *España, un enigma histórico...: 725*.



Muchos de los rasgos peculiares del desarrollo histórico ibérico [he asserted in 1977] se explican en términos de la experiencia fronteriza y la dureza de una empresa, la reconquista, que había conseguido casi la totalidad de sus objetivos a finales del siglo XIII... La existencia de una frontera militar permanente significaba, virtualmente, que la España medieval era una sociedad organizada para la Guerra...⁷

No medievalist has failed to see that the Reconquista, understood in the aseptic and neutral sense, as the territorial expansion of the Christian peninsular kingdoms to the detriment of Al-Andalus or, as Antonio Ubieto put it, the *ocupación violenta de tierras pobladas por gentes musulmanas, tras una acción military*,⁸ usually represents the necessary first stage of a series of transcendental and irreversible changes to which the conquered societies and territories would be subject in the course of their integration into the political, socio-economic and cultural structure of the conquerors.⁹

2. Reasons for historiographical exclusion

However, despite the objective importance of the military concept in the development of medieval Iberian kingdoms, the fact remains that Hispanic medievalism, at least up until the end of the last century, has paid much less attention to the analysis of strictly war-related aspects of the expansion process than to the political, socio-economic and cultural consequences resulting from it. Thus, compared to the meagre or non-existent lines of research related to medieval war, academic historiography, which benefited from the theoretical or methodological innovations of the major historiographical currents of the 20th century, focused its interests on the demographic dynamics that came about as a result of the annexations, the social organisation of the conquered spaces, the changes experienced in the use of the land and ownership systems, the influence on trade networks and activities and on new institutional developments introduced by the conquerors in the cities or territories overtaken from the Muslims.

7. "Many of the peculiar features of Iberian historical development [he asserted in 1977] therefore, are to be explained in the terms of the frontier experience and of the arduousness of an enterprise, the reconquest, which had virtually achieved most of its objectives by the end of the thirteenth century... The existence of a permanent military frontier virtually meant that medieval Spain was a society organised for war". Mackay, Angus. *La España de la Edad Media. Desde la frontera hasta el Imperio, 1000-1500*. Madrid: Cátedra, 1980: 12 (The original English edition is from 1977).

8. "violent occupation of lands inhabited by Muslim peoples, through military action". Ubieto, Antonio. "Valoración de la reconquista peninsular". *Príncipe de Viana*, 31/120-121 (1970): 214.

9. García de Cortázar, José Ángel. "La Reconquista en el siglo XI: ¿Geográfica o cultural?", *IX Centenario da dedicação da Sé de Braga. Congresso Internacional: O Bispo D. Pedro e o Ambiente Político-Religioso do Século XI*. Braga: Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 1990: I, 695-696. For the diverse meanings of the concept of the Reconquista in historiography, see: García Fitz, Francisco. *La Reconquista*. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2010: 35-56.



Most of the studies that discuss these topics assume that war activity acted as the precursor for the profound transformations that would take place in the annexed area, but, until the 1990s, the action of war itself almost never merited the interest of Hispanic medievalism, which had begun to see a renewal in academic circles in the 1970s and '80s. To loosely paraphrase a well-known British specialist, John Gillingham, it could be said that Spanish historians had been so busy studying what happened once the armies accomplished their goals —issues that, on the other hand, are of unquestionable relevance— that they hardly had the chance to devote themselves to analysing what these armies did while making war to achieve such goals.¹⁰

What could be the reason for this obvious lack of interest? As mentioned almost twenty years ago now in certain reflections that will be returned to here,¹¹ in order to understand why Spanish medievalism avoided this field of study, one must consider certain deep-rooted historiographical, political and sociological prejudices that existed for many years in the Spanish university world. In this regard, perhaps the first thing that can be confirmed is that, since the 19th century, but especially during the 20th century, academic historians have approached the study of many facets of war, such as military obligations, urban militias, spoils or the holding of fortresses, to name a few areas of research, in a completely natural way because they considered —not unreasonably— that these subjects were interwoven into the history of institutions, social history, economic history or urban history, as elements that fully belonged within the main lines of work in 20th century historiography and, thus, were worthy of attention by professional researchers.

However, until the second half of the 1980s, the history of battle forms, or how to wage war, was still considered an issue suited to the military, handled by members of the military with scholarly aspirations for colleagues keen on historical subjects. In fact, university historians viewed such subjects as if, in order to approach them, certain tactical or strategic knowledge only available to professional members of the military was required, or simply as if the way to carry out a certain military operation was of no interest and, thus, they avoided any research of this aspect of reality. Therefore, during the 19th and 20th centuries, most of the titles on these topics were published by *amateur* authors, so it is not surprising to note the evident disassociation of military history from other specialised fields of historical research.¹²

10. Gillingham, John. "Richard I and the Science of War in the Middle Ages", *Anglo-Norman Warfare. Studies in late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman military organization and warfare*, Matthew Strickland, ed. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992: 194.

11. García Fitz, Francisco. *Castilla y León frente al Islam. Estrategias de expansión y tácticas militares (siglos XI-XIII)*. Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 1998: 25-26.

12. Ladero, Miguel Ángel. "La organización militar de la Corona de Castilla durante los siglos XIV y XV", *La incorporación de Granada a la Corona de Castilla*, Miguel Ángel Ladero, ed. Granada: Diputación Provincial, 1993: 195; González Jiménez, Manuel; García Fitz, Francisco. "Historia política y estructura de poder. Castilla y León", *La Historiografía Medieval en España. Un balance historiográfico (1968-1998)*. *Actas de la XXV Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella (14 al 18 de julio de 1998)*. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 1999: 201-202.



Even so, it can be argued that this first observation is insufficient in explaining the lack of interest by professional Spanish historians in this subject. It could be held that in order to comprehend this abdication, another particularly relevant intellectual phenomenon must be considered: i.e., the gradual expansion, in Spanish university circles starting in the sixties, of the two major historiographical currents from the 20th century, the *Annales* School and historical materialism. The emphasis that these two approaches placed on economic and social history, along with their evident disdain for political history, managed to further distance the research conducted in Spanish universities from studies on war. After all, in the eyes of the new currents, which were promoting the panorama of Hispanic medievalism with unheard of force, military history was identified with the most antiquated form of positivism, devoted to mere narration of military events that, together with other specific political events and a useless jumble of dates, subsequently constituted the framework for a *histoire événementielle*, or “history of events”, which they forswore.¹³

Yet, in addition to historiographical prejudices, in the Spanish case, one might assert that there are also sociological and political prejudices at the heart of this renunciation: as mentioned above, approaches to these subjects came primarily from military spheres which, after the Spanish Civil War, were closely identified with the Franco regime. In turn, National Catholicism systematically resorted to the use of events, individuals and ideas related to the Reconquista as propaganda devices, giving rise to publications written with heroic, grandiose overtones, a sort of military history *de tambores y trompetas*, to use the term with which American historiography sized it up,¹⁴ which served to further the militaristic, nationalistic, Catholic values of Francoism and saw, in the deeds of Pelayo, El Cid, San Fernando or the Catholic Monarchs, examples from the past worthy of imitation, either for their struggle against foreigners or infidels, or for their defence of a unified homeland. With this background, almost inevitably, the still budding but certainly growing rejection of Spanish university historiography in the sixties and seventies to the Francoist political propositions also extended to a field—that of military history—whose output had been so closely identified with that regime.¹⁵

Evidently, prejudices are longer lasting than the objective circumstances that create them, and therefore it is no surprise that, although institutional Francoism disappeared in the ‘70s and both ideological militarism and National Catholicism were in decline even prior to that time, the university world’s precautions regarding

13. This attitude was not exclusive to Hispanic historiography or medievalism, but rather was part of a much broader current that can be seen in other academic spheres and for any period of history analysed. In this regard, see: Espino, Antonio. “La renovación de la Historia de las Batallas”. *Revista de Historia Militar*, 91 (2001): 159-174.

14. “drums and trumpets”. Borreguero, Cristina. “Nuevas perspectivas para la historia militar: la “New Military History” en Estados Unidos”. *Hispania*, 54/1, 186 (1994): 148-149.

15. In this sense, the disdain for the history of war in the Hispanic Middle Ages in university circles during the ‘60s, ‘70s and ‘80s as a result of being identified with Francoist militarism ran parallel to that experienced by the concept of the Reconquista. In this regard, see: García Fitz, Francisco. *La Reconquista...*: 18-20.



the study of medieval war remained intact for at least two more decades, in other words, almost an entire generation.

It is estimated that *algo así como el 95% de los trabajos de tema medieval generados en España en toda su historia* were published between 1968 and 1998, thus going *casi 'de cero al infinito'* in thirty years.¹⁶ This productive explosion ran parallel to the development of a solid infrastructure for teaching and research activities, reflected in the proliferation of university centres in general and Medieval History Departments or Knowledge Areas in particular, in the creation of foundations and specialised centres for study and research of medieval topics and in the tremendous growth in the number of specialised journals. All of this, in turn, was directly reflected in “the proliferation, perhaps somewhat disproportionate, of symposia, conferences and national, international and local academic meetings with varying degrees of specialisation in the subject”, some of which were circumstantial in nature, others of which were held regularly.¹⁷ However, with respect to the exclusion of studies on military activities in medievalism, not only is the scarcity of publications on this topic coming from academic spheres prior to the ‘90s¹⁸ deemed to be highly significant, but there are also two other circumstances worth mentioning: firstly, that the only long-standing specialised journal, the *Revista de Historia Militar*, founded in 1957, answered to—and continues to answer to—the Ministry of Defence, was managed by the military and its collaborators were mainly military professionals—almost 90% of the articles on medieval military history published before 1990 were written by military professionals—;¹⁹ and secondly, that the longest-running and most prolific periodic meeting devoted to these issues, the *Jornadas de Historia Militar* of the General Castaño Chair in Seville, was, from the outset and up to the present, organised by a

16. “something like 95% of the work on medieval themes published in Spain’s entire history”; “from virtually nothing to infinity”. García de Cortázar, José Ángel. “Glosa de un balance sobre la historiografía medieval española de los últimos treinta años (I)”, *La Historiografía Medieval en España. Un balance historiográfico (1968-1998). Actas de la XXV Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella (14 al 18 de julio de 1998)*. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 1999: 813-814.

17. Ruiz de la Peña, Juan Ignacio; Sanz, María Jesús. “Instrumentos, cauces y expresiones de la actividad investigadora”, *La Historiografía Medieval en España. Un balance historiográfico (1968-1998). Actas de la XXV Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella (14 al 18 de julio de 1998)*. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 1999: 789-798.

18. The only summary about medieval Hispanic armies, published in 1984, was authored by professional members of the military. Redondo, Fernando. *Historia del ejército español. 2. Los ejércitos de la Reconquista*. Madrid: Servicio Histórico Militar, 1984.

19. The other main journal with content closely related to the history of warfare, *Gladius*, specialising in the study of ancient and medieval weapons and military history, which was first published in Spain starting with its second issue, in 1963, under the auspices of the Hoffmeyers, remained virtually disconnected from the Spanish university world until the second half of the eighties, despite the fact that, starting in the mid-sixties, it had institutional ties to the Spanish National Research Council (*Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas-CSIC*). Only after the aforementioned date have certain departments and a limited number of historians discovered not only the value of this publication but also the scientific potential of the *Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas* (Institute of Studies on Ancient Weapons), located in Jaraíz de la Vera (Caceres), which supported it. For the history of the Institute and the journal, see: García Vuelta, Óscar. “El Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas (CSIC). Una aproximación a su historia (1960-1998)”. *Gladius*, 26 (2006): 119-147.



military command centre rather than by university or scientific institutions, although in this case the participation of authors coming from academic circles has always been considerable. A similar case is the *Congresos de Historia Militar* in Saragossa, which has ties to the General Military Academy, although a growing number of academic researchers and institutions have become involved in recent years.

In this context, it should not be surprising that, as recently as 1994, precisely during the *IV Jornadas de Historia Militar* held in Seville, one young researcher pointed out that

*mientras que la guerra en Tierra Santa ya cuenta con dos magníficos trabajos generales al respecto [en referencia a las obras de Raymond Charles Smail y Christopher Marshall], la guerra en la Península todavía no ha merecido algún trabajo que intente englobar de manera sintética pero comprensiva su desarrollo, elementos y significación social.*²⁰

What he said was no doubt true, even though, as he himself noted, a few partial contributions had been made and, while he could not know this, the foundations were already being laid at that time for the panorama to change in relation to this subject.

Certainly, the position of Hispanic medievalism concerning the study of forms of warfare was rather paradoxical: from the 11th to the 13th century, the Iberian kingdoms, and quite particularly, that of Castile-Leon, had been responsible for expansion of such a magnitude that it dwarfed that of the rest of the Christian kingdoms in the West over the same period and in other comparable contexts.²¹ Of course, Hispanic Historiography had always been aware of the importance of these processes, and for this reason it has paid close attention, at times almost exclusively and to the detriment of other fields, to certain aspects of this military history: meticulous reconstruction of the events and chronology thereof, for example, was the leitmotiv of positivist output for many decades. Likewise, documentary and legal sources had made it possible to approach not only the study of economic resources, social structures, political institutions and the ideological sources that generated them, but also the analysis of the social, economic, population and ideological consequences thereof. However—and this is where the historiographical paradox mentioned above lies—on the threshold of the 21st century, researchers had almost no knowledge about

20. “while there are now two excellent general overviews on the war in the Holy Land [in reference to the works by Raymond Charles Smail and Christopher Marshall], the war on the Peninsula has yet to merit any works endeavouring to cover, in a concise but comprehensive manner, its development, elements and social meaning”. Rodríguez García, José Manuel. “Fernando III y sus campañas en el contexto cruzado europeo, 1217-1252”, *IV Jornadas Nacionales de Historia Militar: Fernando III y su época*. Seville: Diputación de Sevilla, 1995: 217.

21. Lomax, Derek. *La Reconquista*. Barcelona: Crítica, 1984: 204. See also: García Fitz, Francisco. “Las formas de la guerra de conquista: el contexto hispánico medieval (siglos XI al XIII)”, *El mundo de los conquistadores. La península ibérica en la Edad Media y su proyección en la conquista de América*, Martín Ríos, ed. Mexico-Madrid: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México-Sílex, 2015: 457-458.



how commanders waged war or how they allocated, moved and distributed their military resources to impose their will upon their adversaries.²²

In sum, almost nothing was known about the 'strategies' and 'tactics' that were used in this process, despite the fact that, beyond the interest that such knowledge could have in and of itself,²³ the analysis of an army's way of doing battle provides more than a few clues about aspects of the community waging the war, from the possibilities and limitations of their material resources —logistics and funding methods— to their social or moral values —by applying chivalric ethics, or the study of how defeated enemies were treated— to their institutional resources —for example, those that acted to recruit and organise an army—, the exercise of power —by analysing leadership formulae and channels—, the status of technological development or the formulation of ideological discourses to justify the armed conflict. Perhaps the assertion by Espino, who stated that *se podría estudiar dicha sociedad [la que despliega un ejército en un campo de batalla] a todos sus niveles teniendo como punto de partida sus encuentros militares* may seem too categorical, but the truth is that a siege, a campaign of destruction or a pitched battle *no deja de ser un compendio de las características, cualidades, defectos, virtudes y límites de la sociedad que lo organizó*.²⁴

3. Historiography prior to the nineties

Perhaps the above assertion on how little was known about forms of warfare prior to the nineties is overly categorical and certain clarifications should be made to bring it to fair terms:²⁵ focusing specifically on the historiography of the kingdoms of Leon and Castile, it must be noted that, both in the past and in the present, traditional

22. While the classic work by Sánchez Albornoz on the army of Asturias and Leon runs up to the 11th century, it does not address the expansion that began in the second half of that century. Sánchez Albornoz, Claudio. "El ejército y la guerra en el reino asturleonés". *Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo. Ordinamenti militari in Occidente nell'alto Medioevo* (Spoleto, 30 marzo-5 aprile 1967). Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1968: 1-136.

23. Suffice it to recall here the unusual attention that these subjects have sparked in recent years amongst videogame designers and their wide-ranging audiences or amongst the increasing numbers of historical recreation fans. Regarding the former, see: Jiménez Alcázar, Juan Francisco. "El arte de la guerra medieval: combates digitales y experiencias de juego". *Roda da Fortuna*, 3/1-1 (2014): 516-546, as well as the more specific collaborations by: Echeverría, Ekaitz. "Abriendo Brecha: La imagen de la guerra de asedio medieval en los videojuegos". *Roda da Fortuna*, 3/1-1 (2014): 547-563; Testi, Darío. "Medieval Total War II: veicolo della conoscenza dell'Arte della Guerra nelle nuove generazioni". *Roda da Fortuna*, 3/1-1 (2014): 564-589; Negro, Adrián Elías. "Representaciones de la guerra en la actualidad: el caso de Age of Empires II y su campaña del Cid". *Roda da Fortuna*, 3/1-1 (2014): 590-610.

24. "this society [which deploys an army on a battlefield] could be studied at every level, using its military encounters as the starting point"; "is indeed a summary of the characteristics, qualities, defects, virtues and limitations of the society that organised it". Espino, Antonio. "La renovación de las Historia de las Batallas...": 171.

25. The list of titles that appears in the following notes does not aim to be comprehensive. Due to space restrictions, a selection of works has been made, but these are by no means all the works published on these subjects in recent years. Furthermore, although every effort has been made to be meticulous in the



positivist historiography, as well as a good number of contributions recently made and supported by more up-to-date historiographical criteria, have made tremendous efforts to narrate the facts and sequence of the conflicts, taking the succession of military events as the common theme. In this regard, the biographies of some of the main monarchs of Castile-Leon are worth recalling, which often address these issues in detail, sometimes even monographic in nature, not to mention other more general works in which the description of these expansion processes represents the main plot.

Furthermore, studies on medieval Castilian weaponry benefited early on from the work done by Mr and Mrs Hoffmeyer at the *Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas*: in 1972 and 1982, Ada Bruhn de Hoffmeyer herself published two important monographs on weapons and armour in medieval Spain²⁶ and her proposal soon had repercussions in Hispanic medievalism, as regards both Catalonia,²⁷ and the territory at hand here, Castile-Leon, to which Álvaro Soler del Campo made an essential contribution in 1990 with his thesis on *La evolución del armamento medieval en el reino castellano-leonés y al-Andalus (siglos XII-XIV)*.²⁸

Likewise, prior to the early 1990s, monographic works had been published on some specific campaigns, especially those in which Alfonso VII and Ferdinand III were involved, as two monarchs with long and intense military careers, which also enjoy the luxury of having well informed and relatively detailed contemporary sources.²⁹

Similarly, the existence of a relevant number of studies from before the nineties, as mentioned above, must be highlighted in relation to certain military operations that had particular repercussions on the balance of the war between Castile-Leon and the Muslims, such as the case of sieges of important Muslim cities: that of Toledo in 1085, those of Jaen and Seville in the middle years of the 13th century and

choice, some significant works may have been left out due to oversight or unawareness. Should this be the case, an apology is in order.

26. Bruhn de Hoffmeyer, Ada. *Arms & Armour in Spain. A Short Survey. Vol. I. The Bronze Age to the End of High Middle Ages*. Madrid: Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas, 1971; Bruhn de Hoffmeyer, Ada. *Arms & Armour in Spain. A Short Survey. Vol. II. From the End of the 12th Century to the Beginnings of the 15th Century*. Madrid: Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas, 1982.

27. Victoria Cirlot, who defended her PhD thesis on *El armamento catalán de los siglos XII al XIV* in 1980, had been in close contact with the aforementioned Institute (Cirlot, Victoria. *El armamento catalán de los siglos XII al XIV*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona (PhD Dissertation), 1980).

28. Soler, Álvaro. *La evolución del armamento medieval en el reino castellano-leonés y al-Andalus (siglos XII-XIV)*. Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid (PhD Dissertation), 1991 (published in: Soler del Campo, Álvaro, *La evolución del armamento medieval en el reino castellano-leonés y al-Andalus (siglos XII-XIV)*. Madrid: Servicio de Publicaciones del EME, 1993). This author also had a productive relationship with the *Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas*.

29. Regarding Alfonso VII: Díaz, Esperanza; Molina, Providencia. "Las campañas de Alfonso VII en Andalucía: un precedente de la conquista de Córdoba", *Actas del V Coloquio Internacional de Historia Medieval de Andalucía (Córdoba, 27- 30 de noviembre de 1986)*, Emilio Cabrera, coord. Cordova: Diputación de Córdoba, 1988: 63-70. Regarding Ferdinand III: González, Julio. "Las conquistas de Fernando III en Andalucía". *Hispania*, 6 (1946): 515-631; Eslava, Juan. "La campaña de Quesada (1224)". *Cuadernos de Estudios Medievales*, 12-13 (1984): 5-23.



that of Tarifa in the later years of the same century.³⁰ In most cases, however, the interest is not focused on the analysis of siege tactics and techniques so much as on the reconstruction of the sequence of events.

But above all, the studies on certain operations and on the practice of war had placed the emphasis on the major battles that mark the conflict between Castile-Leon and the North African empires —Almoravids and Almohads— that had gained control over Al-Andalus between the 11th and 13th centuries. Thus, the series of pitched battles that took place during these centuries —Zalaca (1086), Uclés (1108), Alarcos (1195), Las Navas de Tolosa (1212)— in themselves summarised the panorama of military history.³¹

There is no doubt that this viewpoint corresponded to a long tradition dating back to the 19th century, the features of which have been outlined on several occasions by specialised historiography,³² which focused its attention on the pitched battles and left out the study of other aspects of war, thus magnifying the relevance of the former and underestimating the latter. Of course, the few non-Spanish authors that had addressed an analysis of the Castilian-Leonese military reality in the Middle Ages merely reproduced such approaches: it is noteworthy, for example, that in analysing the ‘military art’ of medieval Spain, Ferdinand Lot devoted a great

30. For Toledo: Lévi-Provençal, Evariste. “Alphonse VI et la prise de Tolède (1085)”. *Hespéris*, 12 (1931): 33-49; Miranda, José. *La Reconquista de Toledo por Alfonso VI*. Toledo: Instituto de Estudios Visigóticos-Mozárabes de San Eugenio, 1980; Miranda, José. “Reflexiones militares sobre la conquista de Toledo por Alfonso VI”, *Estudios sobre Alfonso VI y la reconquista de Toledo: Actas del II Congreso Internacional de Estudios Mozárabes (Toledo, 20-26 mayo 1985)*. Toledo: Instituto de Estudios Visigóticos-Mozárabes, 1987: 251-294; Izquierdo, Ricardo. *Alfonso VI y la toma de Toledo*. Toledo: Instituto Provincial de Investigaciones y Estudios Toledanos, 1986. For Jaen: Ballesteros, Manuel. “La conquista de Jaén por Fernando III”. *Cuadernos de Historia de España*, 20 (1953): 63-138. For Seville: González, Julio. *Repartimiento de Sevilla*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1951: I, 141-221; Martínez Valverde, Carlos. “La campaña de Sevilla y su conquista por Fernando III”. *Revista de Historia Militar*, 22 (1978): 7-43. For Tarifa: Gaibrois, Mercedes. “Tarifa y la política de Sancho IV de Castilla”. *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, 74 (1919): 418-436, 521-529; 75 (1919): 349-355; 76 (1920): 53-57, 123-160, 420-449; 77 (1920): 192-215.

31. For decades, the mandatory reference material on the major battles of the Reconquista was the extraordinary work by Ambrosio Huici (Huici, Ambrosio. *Las grandes batallas de la Reconquista durante las invasiones africanas (Almorávides, Almohades y Benimerines)*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1956), which contains monographic studies on Zalaca, Uclés, Alarcos, Las Navas and, beyond the chronological timeline dealt with here, El Salado (there is a new edition with an introductory study by Emilio Molina y Vicente Carlos Navarro Oltra in Granada: Huici, Ambrosio. *Las grandes batallas de la Reconquista durante las invasiones africanas (Almorávides, Almohades y Benimerines)*. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2000). See also: García Gómez, Emilio; Oliver, Jaime. “Novedades sobre la batalla llamada de al-Zall~qa (1086)”. *Al-Andalus*, 15 (1950): 111-155; Lagardère, Vicent. *Le vendredi de Zallaqa*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1989; Slaughter, John E. “De nuevo sobre la batalla de Uclés”. *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 9 (1974-1975): 393-404; Martínez Fronce, Félix Manuel. “La dinámica estratégica hacia Uclés y sus puntos de encuentro”. *Anales de la Universidad de Alicante. Historia Medieval*, 6 (1987): 75-91; Eslava, Juan. “Tácticas en la batalla de las Navas de Tolosa”. *Cuadernos de Estudios Medievales*, 6-7 (1981): 39-53.

32. The first criticism of the definition of battle as the focus of military activity of medieval armies came from: Smail, Raymond Charles. *Crusading Warfare (1097-1193)*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1956: 12-15 (there is a second edition with a bibliographical introduction by Christopher Marshall in Cambridge: Smail, Raymond Charles. *Crusading Warfare (1097-1193)*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1995). His propositions are part of the current historiographical paradigm.



number of pages to the main clashes on the open battlefield —Zalaca, Alarcos, Las Navas de Tolosa— but decided to overlook an analysis of the conquest of Andalusia by Ferdinand III, expressly citing the fact that this was a war of sieges rather than battles to justify his disinterest.³³ Hispanic historiography was not far removed from these assumptions and thus, here too, battles were considered the fundamental benchmarks of the Spanish military experience. In sum, from the perspective of war, the Castilian-Leonese Reconquista, defined as a territorial expansion process, was substantially reduced to a series of pitched battles.³⁴

However, in order to properly assess the situation of studies on high medieval war in Hispanic medievalism, the limited repercussions it has in academic life is at least as significant —or perhaps even more so— as the small number of contributions or the clear bias toward the analysis of pitched battles. A brief review of the bibliography cited in the main summary works or university texts on Medieval History in Spain published during the seventies, eighties and even the early nineties is sufficient to discern that just two or three titles are devoted to these subjects, which could well be an evident sign not only of the shortage thereof but also of the limited repercussions they have on university historiography. Significantly, the only work often repeated is the aforementioned book by Huici on the major battles of the Reconquista, which, in practice, at least until the early 1990s, became almost exclusively the sole academic reference of university textbooks for subjects related to military tactics. This in turn shows how strongly rooted the image of the pitched battle as synonymous with medieval war still was at that time.

4. Historiographical renewal starting in the nineties

4.1 The impact of French and English-speaking Historiography

Not until the late '80s did specialists' interest slowly awaken in discovering in greater detail the strategic and tactical approaches of the monarchs and armies of Castile and Leon in their conflict against Islam during the high Middle Ages.³⁵ In

33. As an example of this attitude, one need only compare the 16 pages devoted to the study of the battle of Las Navas to the three that summarise the 30 years it took to conquer the Guadalquivir Valley. Lot, Ferdinand. *L'art militaire et les armées au Moyen Âge en Europe et dans le Proche Orient*. Paris: Payot, 1946: II, 162-297.

34. See, for example, what is stated in: González Simancas, Manuel. *España Militar a principios de la Baja Edad Media: batalla de Las Navas de Tolosa*. Madrid: Talleres del Depósito de la Guerra, 1925: VI-VII; Huici, Ambrosio. *Las grandes batallas de la Reconquista...*: 9.

35. It should be highlighted that this state of the art focuses solely on studies about ways of war, strategies and tactics in high medieval Castile-Leon, and excludes the important historiographical output concerning the High and Late Middle Ages, as well as other aspects of war that have also received attention by specialists in recent years and developed considerably, such as the role of the Military Orders or castellological, archaeological, organisation or ideological studies. All of these deserve specific states of the art.



this regard, it is only fair to point out that the changes that took place in this field of Spanish medievalism are closely related to the work of certain French authors, whose texts were known in Spain since the seventies and early eighties, such as the cases of Georges Duby and Philippe Contamine.³⁶

Above all, however, this historiographical renewal³⁷ is greatly indebted to the extraordinary current on this subject that was developed in the English-speaking world throughout the second half of the 20th century: six decades ago now, studies on the way of waging war took a qualitative leap in British historiography and managed to become fully integrated into the horizon of university medievalism. The now classic, acclaimed work by Raymond Charles Smail on war during the Crusades in the 11th and 12th centuries was the driving force behind this leap and it was also the work that had the earliest impact on Spanish output interested in the analysis of combat: perhaps Eslava, in the late seventies, was the first to confirm that some of Smail's assertions were highly useful in understanding the tactical behaviour of the troops that clashed at Las Navas de Tolosa, yet it was in the mid-eighties when it started to become clear in Spain that the great British specialist had provided, besides some very significant specific data, an authentic explanatory model that could feasibly be applied to the study of the military experience on the Iberian Peninsula. This was confirmed when the war advice given by Don Juan Manuel in his works was approached from this new perspective.³⁸

On the tails of Smail's work, there followed quite a productive line of research that continued to develop his methodological proposals over the following decades, although especially starting from the late eighties and early nineties. Historians such as Reginal Allen Brown, John Gillingham, Bernard Bachrach, Christopher Marshall, Matthew Strickland, Randall Rogers, Jim Bradbury, John France, Michael Prestwich, Stephen Morillo, Matthew Bennett, Kelly DeVries, Clifford Rogers o David Nicolle,

36. By Georges Duby, the book that would have the earliest impact on Spanish historiography concerned with these subjects was: Duby, George. *Le dimanche de Bouvines—27 juillet 1214*. Paris: Gallimard, 1973. The influence of Philippe Contamine would come through two major works: Contamine, Philippe. *Guerre, Etat et société à la fin du Moyen Âge. Etudes sur les armées des rois de France, 1337-1494*. Paris: Mouton, 1972; Contamine, Philippe. *La guerre au Moyen Âge*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1980. They all began to circulate quite early in Spain, and certainly before the editions came out in Spanish.

37. The idea that studies on medieval Hispanic war experienced a profound renewal starting in the 1990s has been pointed out on several occasions by specialists who have had the opportunity to reflect on recent trends concerning these studies. Sometimes, the concept of 'new military history' has even been used to define the historiographical output on these subjects that developed in Spain starting from said period. For example: Gouveia Monteiro, João. "Estratégia e risco em Aljubarrota: a decisão de dar batalha à luz do 'paradigma Gillingham'", *A Guerra e a Sociedade na Idade Média. VI Jornadas Luso-Espanholas de Estudos Medievais (Alcobaça – Batalha - Porto de Mós, 6-8 de Novembro de 2008)*. Coimbra: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos Medievais-Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2009: I, 79; Orsi, Mario. "La guerra en la Corona de Aragón...": 568; Arias, Fernando. "The Many Histories of Medieval Spain". *The Medieval Journal*, 2 (2012): 85-86; Rodríguez García, José Manuel: "Reconquista y cruzada. Un balance historiográfico doce años después (2000-2012)". *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie III. Historia Medieval*, 26 (2013): 389.

38. Eslava, Juan. "Tácticas en la batalla de las Navas de Tolosa...": 39-53, García Fitz, Francisco. "La guerra en la obra de Don Juan Manuel", *Estudios sobre Málaga y reino de Granada en el V Centenario de su conquista*, José Enrique López de Coca, ed. Malaga: Diputación de Málaga, 1987: 55-72.



directly or indirectly followed in their wake, opening up a specific field of research within English-speaking medievalism and establishing analysis models that, it must be insisted, proved to be perfectly applicable to Hispanic scenarios.

While the works overall by these authors and others that began to publish their own shortly afterwards have had a considerable influence on specialised Hispanic historiography, the fact is that some of them in particular were received at the time with decisive impact on Spanish medievalists who, while still few in number, had begun to show growing interest in these issues since the mid-eighties and had been working in these lines of research. In this regard, it is definitely worth highlighting at least four important contributions that served as models and stimuli for the study of the Iberian case: firstly, the monograph published in 1992 by Christopher Marshall on the war in the Latin East during the 13th century, a chronological continuation of the work by Raymond Charles Smail, which provided a splendid example of what could and should be done when studying the military experience on the western frontiers of Christianity; secondly, the three masterful articles by John Gillingham —on Richard the Lionheart, William the Bastard and William Marshal— which Matthew Strickland wisely selected and published jointly in his *Anglo-Norman Warfare*, also published in 1992, works that, with the passing of time, would constitute what would end up being known as ‘the Gillingham paradigm’; thirdly, the analysis by John France of the roots of the victory of the Crusades in the East, published two years later, whose explanations transcend the Eastern realm and could be transferred to the West; and finally, the study that Stephen Morillo devoted to war in the Anglo-Saxon world, also published in 1994.³⁹

4.2 Pitched battles: the inevitable attraction of extraordinary events

These texts have, without a doubt, been decisive in the renewal that, as mentioned before, took place in Hispanic historiography on these subjects in the field of the kingdom of Castile and Leon between the 11th and 13th centuries. However, within the framework of this transformation, perhaps the first thing that draws one’s attention is that the studies about certain major confrontations on the open battlefield have remained in the spotlight of specialised Spanish output, but now the forms of analysis and perspectives of study that were created in connection with more recent and innovative trends in English-speaking and French historiography, have made it possible to move beyond mere narration of the events to embark on

39. Marshall, Christopher. J. *Warfare in the Latin East, 1192-1291*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1992; Gillingham, John. “Richard I and the Science of War...”: 194-207; Gillingham, John. “William the Bastard at War”, *Anglo-Norman Warfare. Studies in late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman military organization and warfare*, Matthew Strickland, ed. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992: 143-160; Gillingham, John. “War and Chivalry in the History of William the Marshall”, *Anglo-Norman Warfare. Studies in late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman military organization and warfare*, Matthew Strickland, ed. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992: 251-263; France, John. *Victory in the East. A military history of the First Crusade*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1994; Morillo, Stephen. *Warfare under the Anglo-Norman Kings. 1066-1136*. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1994.



detailed research of the components of armies, the strategic role of battles in the general context of territorial expansion, tactical formations, movements of troops or the mentalities and ideologies of the protagonists and the authors that reported their acts and words.

In this regard, the series of scientific meetings held in 1995 on the occasion of the centennial of the battle of Alarcos helped give a new boost to the specific study of this clash and the overall circumstances surrounding it, spotlighting certain sources that had almost never been used before in this type of study, such as archaeology, and giving way to a new means of approaching the phenomenon.⁴⁰

However, perhaps the pitched battle that has most benefited from this renewed interest in analysing the military experience is that of Las Navas de Tolosa. Certainly, the works by Martín Alvira Cabrer, published during the mid-nineties as forerunners to his PhD Thesis, defended in 2000, marked a turning point in the knowledge that researchers now have of the battle and opened up new horizons for historical research applied to the study of war, placing special emphasis on the universe of the war mentality and ideology within the setting of a major head-on clash on the open battlefield, based on the interpretation models proposed by Georges Duby.⁴¹

The wealth of sources related to this battle and the numerous options for study they afford have prompted the creation of several monographs in addition to the previous ones, from other viewpoints more closely related to logistics, weaponry, tactics or the organisation of opposing armies, in some cases endeavouring to offer the necessary contextualisation so that each of the elements, factors and specific circumstances involved in the battle can more easily be placed in the perspective of general modes of waging war in the medieval West.⁴² Furthermore, the analysis of

40. Zozaya, Juan, ed. *Alarcos 95. El fiel de la balanza*. Toledo: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Junta de Comunidades de Castilla-La Mancha, 1995; Izquierdo, Ricardo; Ruiz, Francisco, coords. *Alarcos 1195: Actas del congreso internacional conmemorativo del VIII centenario de la Batalla de Alarcos (Ciudad Real, 3-6 de abril de 1995)*. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 1996. Prior to this commemoration, a few interesting approaches had been published, such as that of: Muñoz, Juan; Pérez de Tudela, María Isabel. "La batalla de Alarcos". *Ejército*, 643 (1993): 60-69, and an interesting summary of this battle that has recently come out, see: Ruiz Moreno, Manuel Jesús. *La batalla de Alarcos, 1195*. Madrid: Almena, 2015.

41. Alvira, Martín. "Dimensiones religiosas y liturgia de la batalla plenomedieval: Las Navas de Tolosa, 16 de julio de 1212". *XX Siglos*, 19 (1994): 33-46; Alvira, Martín. "La muerte del enemigo en el Pleno Medievo: cifras e ideología (el modelo de Las Navas de Tolosa)". *Hispania*, 55/2, 190 (1995): 403-424; Alvira, Martín. "De Alarcos a Las Navas de Tolosa: Idea y realidad de los orígenes de la batalla de 1212", *Alarcos 1195. Actas del congreso internacional conmemorativo del VIII centenario de la Batalla de Alarcos (Ciudad Real, 3-6 de abril de 1995)*, Ricardo Izquierdo, Francisco Ruiz, coords. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 1996: 249-264; Alvira, Martín. "El desafío del *Miramamolín* antes de la batalla de Las Navas de Tolosa (1212). Fuentes, datación y posibles orígenes". *Al-Qantara*, 18/2 (1997): 463-490; Alvira, Martín. *Guerra e ideología en la España medieval: cultura y actitudes históricas ante el giro de principios del siglo XIII. Batallas de Las Navas (1212) y Muret (1213)*. Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid (PhD Dissertation), 2000.

42. Vara, Carlos. *El Lunes de Las Navas*. Jaen: Universidad de Jaén, 1999; Rosado, María Dolores; López Payer, Manuel. *La batalla de las Navas de Tolosa. Historia y Mito*. Jaen: Caja Rural de Jaén, 2001; López Payer, Manuel; Rosado, María Dolores. *La batalla de Las Navas de Tolosa*. Madrid: Almena, 2002; García Fitz, Francisco. *Las Navas de Tolosa*. Barcelona: Ariel, 2005.



the 1212 summer campaign offers a paradigmatic case for the study of the crusading ideology, practice and culture in the 13th century.⁴³

This list of works, which alone is already quite long in number and analysis perspectives, was enhanced as a result of the commemorative celebrations held throughout 2012 to mark the eighth centennial of Las Navas de Tolosa, although most of the contributions did not focus on analysing tactics or battle forms. On the one hand, several national and international scientific meetings were held on the occasion of the event that helped broaden the knowledge not only of the battle, but also of the critical moment in history in which it took place, which would represent a milestone within the Iberian context, as well as in Europe and the Maghreb.⁴⁴ On the other, the commemoration of the battle not only spurred the publication of several summary and dissemination works⁴⁵ and the re-publication of several titles, some of which, like that of Huici, authentic essential classics on the subject, despite the years that had elapsed since its first edition,⁴⁶ but a number of journals also

43. Holt, Edward Lawrence. *Out of Many, One?: the voice(s) in the crusade ideology of Las Navas de Tolosa*. Durham: Duke University (PhD Dissertation), 2010; Holt, Edward Lawrence. "Out of Many, One?: the voice(s) in the crusade ideology of Las Navas de Tolosa". Duke University. 15 September 2015 <http://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/10161/2518/Holt_Edward_Thesis_final.pdf?sequence=1>; Gómez, Miguel Dolan. *The Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa: The Culture and Practice of Crusading in Medieval Iberia*. Tennessee: University of Tennessee (PhD Dissertation), 2011; Gómez, Miguel Dolan. "The Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa: The Culture and Practice of Crusading in Medieval Iberia". University of Tennessee. 15 September 2015 <http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_graddiss/1079>.

44. Already in 2010, issue XXXVII of the *Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella* was devoted to reflecting on 1212-1214. *El trienio que hizo a Europa*. The scientific meetings held throughout 2012 in Jaen, Najera and Baeza must be highlighted, as well as those held within the framework of the 47th *International Congress on Medieval Studies*, organised by the *Medieval Institute* of Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo (USA), at which four of the sessions were devoted to the study of the battle. The conference held every four years by the *Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, which was held in Cáceres from 25 to 29 June 2012, also served to commemorate the battle. Except for the latter two, the publication of which is unknown to date, the results of these encounters were published in subsequent years: 1212-1214. *El trienio que hizo a Europa*. XXXVII *Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella* (19 al 23 de julio de 2010). Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 2011; López Ojeda, Esther, coord. 1212, *un año, un reinado, un tiempo de despegue*. XXIII *Semana de Estudios Medievales (Nájera, 30 de julio al 3 de agosto de 2012)*. Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2013; Cressier, Patrice; Salvatierra, Vicente, eds. *Las Navas de Tolosa. 1212-2012. Miradas Cruzadas*. Jaen: Universidad de Jaén, 2014; Estepa, Carlos; Carmona, María Antonia, coords. *La Península Ibérica en tiempo de Las Navas de Tolosa*. Madrid: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2014.

45. Pavón, Julia; Arzoz, Íñigo. 1212. *La batalla de Las Navas de Tolosa. Ocho siglos después*. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 2012.

46. Huici, Ambrosio. *Estudios sobre la campaña de Las Navas de Tolosa*, Roldán Jimeno, ed. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2011 (the first edition is from 1916); Melo, Diego, ed. *Dos estudios en torno a La batalla de al-ʿIqāb o Las Navas de Tolosa (1212) en al-Andalus: los reinos cristianos de la Península Ibérica frente a los Almohades*. Coquimbo: Centro Mohammed VI para el Diálogo de Civilizaciones, 2012 (includes publications: García Fitz, Francisco. "Las Navas de Tolosa, ¿un punto de inflexión en las dinámicas históricas peninsulares?", *Dos estudios en torno a La batalla de al-ʿIqāb o Las Navas de Tolosa (1212) en al-Andalus: los reinos cristianos de la Península Ibérica frente a los Almohades*, Diego Melo, ed. Coquimbo: Centro Mohammed VI para el Diálogo de Civilizaciones, 2012: 11-58; Vidal, Francisco. "Al-ʿIqāb: Las Navas de Tolosa en las fuentes árabes", *Dos estudios en torno a La batalla de al-ʿIqāb o Las Navas de Tolosa (1212) en al-Andalus: los reinos cristianos de la Península Ibérica frente a los Almohades*, Diego Melo, ed. Coquimbo: Centro Mohammed VI para el Diálogo de Civilizaciones, 2012: 65-78).



devoted sections or entire issues to the topic.⁴⁷ Finally, but perhaps most significantly as regards our knowledge about Las Navas de Tolosa, the commemoration of the battle coincided with the publication of the most important monograph devoted to this pitched battle in recent decades, authored by Martín Alvira Cabrer.⁴⁸

While it may seem, due to the quantity and quality of the work on pitched battles published in the last two decades,⁴⁹ that these continue to be the mainstay of war activities, the fact is that, paradoxically, what some of these studies have pointed out and most authors acknowledge by now, such events were exceptional within the war panorama, even though their impact on contemporaries and on the memories created by their occurrence was truly extraordinary.⁵⁰

4.3 The struggle for control over territory: sieges, frontiers, fortresses and war of attrition

Indeed, what the most recent works have revealed is that medieval war, especially when it had an impact on control over territory—as in the paradigmatic case of the expansion of Christian peninsular kingdoms at the expense of Islam—was geared primarily toward domination of the strongholds that organised the space—castles, walled cities, etc.—and thus, the furtherance of studies not only on sieges, but also on the military functioning of fortresses, comes as no surprise.

Once again, the output after the decade of the nineties returned to specific examination of sieges of large cities that had been studied in previous decades. This time, however, the proposals are not limited to linear narration of the facts, but rather go into a full analysis of these events from comparative viewpoints, placing the blockades into the general context of the ways of waging war and leading

47. This is the case of: Fernández de Córdova, Álvaro, ed. “Cristianismo e Islam en el siglo de las Navas de Tolosa (1212)”. *Anuario de Historia de la Iglesia*, 20 (2011): 101-362; Doubleday, Simon; Gómez, Miguel, eds. “On (de)commemoration: rethinking the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa”. *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, 4/1 (2012): 1-134; “La batalla de las Navas de Tolosa o al-‘Iqāb (1212)”. *Alcazaba. Revista Histórico-Cultural*, 12-13 (2012-2013): 45-138.

48. Based on his previous work and in particular, his PhD thesis, defended in 2000, in 2012 this author published an exceptional monograph, which is probably the most comprehensive study in recent decades on this battle. Alvira, Martín. *Las Navas de Tolosa, 1212. Idea, liturgia y memoria de la batalla*. Madrid: Sílex, 2012.

49. In addition to the foregoing, the monographic study on the battles of El Cid published in 2005 by: Montaner, Alberto; Boix, Alfonso. *Guerra en Šarq Al-‘andalus: las batallas cidianas de Morella (1084) y Cuarte (1094)*. Saragossa: Instituto de Estudios Islámicos y del Próximo Oriente, 2005, must also be mentioned, and it must also be recalled that the study of the battle of Las Navas and its circumstances has not ceased to raise interest and generate new proposals for interpretation since the commemoration in 2012. Thus, for example: Peinado, Rafael. “El pastor de Las Navas o trampa ideológica de una imagen de cruzada”, *La literatura no ha existido siempre. Para Juan Carlos Rodríguez, teoría, historia, invención*, Miguel Ángel García, Ángela Olalla, Andrés Soria, coords. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2015: 439-453.

50. García Fitz, Francisco. “La batalla de Las Navas de Tolosa: el impacto de un acontecimiento extraordinario”, *Las Navas de Tolosa. 1212-2012. Miradas Cruzadas*, Patrice Cressier, Vicente Salvatierra, eds. Jaen: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Jaén, 2014: 11-36.



campaigns, and from other angles scarcely contemplated in previous historiography, such as logistics, receiving supplies, funding, technology or tactical movements.

In certain cases, thanks to the wealth of sources, it has been possible to analyse in detail and flesh out actual models for action: for the Castilian-Leonese crown, the siege of Seville in 1248 represents a case that has made it possible to approach and contemplate, as if from a watchtower, the ways of setting up the blockades, battle systems and techniques, weaponry and assault technology or the composition and size of a central medieval army organised to face the enormous challenge of conquering a large city. The celebration of the 750th anniversary of its annexation in 1998 was a perfect excuse to delve deeper into a military phenomenon of tremendous historical relevance.⁵¹

For their uniqueness, the assault machines and techniques used in the major blockades have been the subject of specific studies focusing not only on description, typology and operation thereof, but also on how they were deployed during a blockade, analysing their effectiveness and assessing their usefulness.⁵²

Moreover, works have also started to appear that offer comprehensive views of the siege war on the Iberian Peninsula and that go beyond specific cases to endeavour to analyse this type of operation within broader time or space frameworks which at any rate cover the subject of Castile-Leon. For example, for the 12th century, Randall Rogers proposed a wide-ranging contextualisation of the major Hispanic blockades within the general panorama in the Mediterranean world, which makes it possible to put the conquests of Majorca, Saragossa, Lisbon, Almeria or Tortosa into proper perspective.⁵³

The armed conflict between Christians and Muslims, its strong territorial nature and as a struggle for control over space and the focus on strongholds in the development of the confrontations required taking a new look at these geopolitical areas in which the clash was more obvious and everyday, in other words, at the border between the two worlds. It is evident that in these areas the forms of conflict were strongly affected by the great degree of fortification of the territory. Thus, in recent years, specialists have addressed two intertwined realities: firstly, the analysis

51. García Fitz, Francisco. "El cerco de Sevilla: reflexiones sobre la guerra de asedio en la Edad Media", *Sevilla, 1248. Congreso Internacional conmemorativo del 750 aniversario de la conquista de Sevilla por Fernando III, Rey de Castilla y León (Sevilla, 23-27 de noviembre de 1998)*, Manuel González Jiménez, coord. Seville: Fundación Areces, 2000: 115-154. See also the informative contribution authored by: García Fernández, Manuel. "1248. La conquista de Sevilla". *Desperta Ferro*, 13 (2012): 44-49.

52. García Fitz, Francisco. "Tecnología militar y guerra de asedios. La experiencia castellano-leonesa, siglos XI al XIII", *Military Studies in Medieval Europe*, Guy de Boe, Frans Verhaeghe, eds. Zellik: Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium, 1997: 33-41; García Fitz, Francisco. "¿Machinis validas? Tipología y funcionalidad de las máquinas de asedio en el medievo hispano. Castilla-León, siglos XI al XIII", *Actas del III Congreso de Castellología Ibérica (Guadalajara, 28 de octubre-1 de noviembre de 2005)*, Amador Ruibal, coord. Guadalajara: Asociación Española de Amigos de los Castillos-Diputación de Guadalajara, 2005: 219-254.

53. Rogers, Randall. *Latin Siege Warfare in the Twelfth Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. For the same period, also see: Powers, James. "Life on the Cutting Edge: The Besieged Town on the Luso-Hispanic Frontier in the Twelfth Century", *The Medieval City under Siege*, Ivy A. Corfis, Michael Wolfe, eds. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1995: 17-34.



of the war-related functioning of fortifications, pointing out that their defensive abilities, which had always been emphasised in historiography, were supplemented with other clearly offensive capabilities that were essential to the accomplishment of the territorial expansion projects within the frontier setting.⁵⁴

Secondly, this realisation has prompted numerous authors to delve deeper into the study of the relationships and connections of military, political, fiscal, logistics and visual natures existing between different fortresses, enabling us to speak of

54. Castrillo, María Concepción. *La tenencia de fortalezas en la Corona de Castilla durante la Baja Edad Media (Relaciones de poder entre monarquía, nobleza y ciudades). Siglos XIII-XV*. Madrid: Universidad Complutense (PhD Dissertation), 1997; García Fitz, Francisco. "Pora acreçentamiento de muestros regnos. Las funciones ofensivas de los castillos de frontera", *La fortaleza medieval. Realidad y Símbolo*, José Antonio Barrio, José Vicente Cabezuolo, eds. Alicante: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 1998: 75-89; García Fitz, Francisco. "Funciones bélicas de las fortificaciones en el Medievo Extremeño". *Castillos de España*, 118, (2000): 13-25; García Fitz, Francisco. "El 'reflejo obsidional' y su plasmación en la normativa medieval castellano-leonesa de la Plena Edad Media", *III Estudios de Frontera: Convivencia, defensa y comunicación en la Frontera (Alcalá la Real, 18 al 20 de noviembre de 1999)*. Jaen: Diputación Provincial, 2000: 269-292; García Fitz, Francisco. "Guerra y fortificaciones en contextos de frontera. Algunos casos hispánicos de la Plena Edad Media", *Simpósio Internacional sobre Castelos. Mil Anos de Fortificações na Península Ibérica e no Magreb (500-1500) (Palmela, 3-8 abril 2000)*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisbon: Colibrí, 2002: 519-532; García Fitz, Francisco. "Guerra y fortificación en el Medievo hispánico", *El castillo medieval en tiempos de Alfonso X el Sabio*, Ángel Luis Molina, Jorge A. Eiroa, eds. Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 2009: 41-76; Molénat, Jean-Pierre. "Des fortifications islamiques aux fortifications d'époque chrétienne dans la région de Tolède à travers les textes, du IX^e au XV^e siècle", *Simpósio Internacional sobre Castelos. Mil Anos de Fortificações na Península Ibérica e no Magreb (500-1500) (Palmela, 3-8 abril 2000)*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisbon: Colibrí, 2002: 251-258; Molero, Jesús; Arcos, María del Carmen; Molina, Manuel. "Vigilar caminos, defender la frontera: la fortaleza almohade de Miraflores (Piedrabuena, Ciudad Real)", *Las Navas de Tolosa. 1212-2012. Miradas Cruzadas*, Patrice Cressier, Vicente Salvatierra, eds. Jaen: Universidad de Jaén, 2014: 577-591; Palacios, J. Santiago. *Fortalezas y poder político. Castillos del reino de Toledo*. Guadalajara: Aache, 2008: 185-240; Rodríguez-Picavea, Enrique. "Fortalezas y organización territorial en el Campo de Calatrava (siglos XII-XV)", *Simpósio Internacional sobre Castelos. Mil Anos de Fortificações na Península Ibérica e no Magreb (500-1500) (Palmela, 3-8 abril 2000)*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisbon: Colibrí, 2002: 623-632; Valera, Enrique. *La fortaleza medieval: simbolismo y poder en la Edad Media*. Avila: Junta de Castilla y León, 2002: 79-158. Relating to the functions of frontier fortresses controlled by military orders and the role of these institutions in frontier contexts, in particular, see: Ayala, Carlos de. "Las fortalezas castellanas de la Orden de Calatrava en el siglo XII". *En la España Medieval*, 16 (1993): 9-35; García Fitz, Francisco. "Las órdenes militares castellano-leonesas y la acción de frontera en el siglo XIII", *Identidad y representación de la frontera en la España medieval (siglos XI-XIV)*, Carlos de Ayala, Pascal Buresi, Philippe Josserand, eds. Madrid: Casa de Velázquez-Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2001: 123-157; Ayala, Carlos de. *Las órdenes militares hispánicas en la Edad Media (siglos XII-XV)*. Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2003: 561-590; Ayala, Carlos de. "Frontera y Órdenes Militares en la Edad Media castellano-leonesa (siglos XII-XIII)". *Studia Histórica. Historia Medieval*, 24 (2006): 87-112; Forey, Alan. "The Military Orders and the Spanish Reconquest in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries". *Traditio*, 40 (1984): 197-234; Rodríguez-Picavea, Enrique. *Los monjes guerreros en los reinos hispánicos. Las órdenes militares en la Península Ibérica durante la Edad Media*. Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, 2008: 154-165; Ruibal, Amador. "Funciones de las fortalezas en los territorios de las 'órdenes militares'", *II Estudios de Frontera. Actividad y vida en la Frontera Frontera (Alcalá la Real, 19-22 de noviembre de 1997)*. Jaen: Diputación Provincial, 1998: 709-718; Ruiz Gómez, Francisco. "Las huestes de las órdenes militares", *Las Órdenes Militares en la Península Ibérica*, Ricardo Izquierdo, Francisco Ruiz, coords. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2000: 416-426; Valera, Enrique. "Salvatierra: simbolismo y poder en una fortaleza de la Orden de Calatrava", *Simpósio Internacional sobre Castelos. Mil Anos de Fortificações na Península Ibérica e no Magreb (500-1500) (Palmela, 3-8 abril 2000)*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisbon: Colibrí, 2002: 633-648.



castral systems, networks or structures. While the presence of wide-ranging types of relationships between many of the strongholds erected within a single frontier space is unquestionable, an extensive debate has developed concerning the way in which the existence of such connections may have determined the war activities of the different frontier garrisons. Often, the idea that the frontier fortress networks could have operated as authentic defensive lines or systems designed to prevent, stop or block invasions has been hinted at in a good number of works devoted to these subjects, although such complex action as coordinated activity of this kind seems incompatible with the human resources normally available to frontier fortresses and with the ways of making and understanding war during this period.⁵⁵

55. Every two years since 1995, scientific seminars are held at Alcalá la Real (Jaen), focused on studying the world of medieval frontiers and published under the generic title of *Estudios de Frontera*, coordinated by José Rodríguez Molina and Francisco Toro Ceballos. Within this framework, a good number of works has appeared that addressed the study of frontier defence systems, particularly issues II and III of José Rodríguez Molina y Francisco Toro Ceballos, cited in the note above, and V *Estudios de Frontera. Funciones de la red castral fronteriza (Alcalá la Real, 14-15 de noviembre de 2003)*. Jaen: Diputación Provincial, 2004. Interesting work can also be found in the volumes compiling the findings of the two main symposia on fortifications held in Palmela (Portugal) in 2000 and 2010: *Simpósio Internacional sobre Castelos. Mil Anos de Fortificações na Península Ibérica e no Magreb (500-1500)*, cited in the note above, and *Fortificações e Território na Península Ibérica e no Magreb - Séculos VI a XVI*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisbon: Edições Colibri-Campo Arqueológico de Mértola, 2013. Contributions concerning the organisation of space, frontiers and fortifications date back to the mid-'80s, as shown in certain titles listed below, but they multiply in number during the nineties. Specifically for the Castilian-Leonese area during the period dealt with here, see: Alcázar, Eva. "Las fortificaciones del concejo fronterizo de Jaén. Siglos XIII-XV", *Fortificações e Território na Península Ibérica e no Magreb - Séculos VI a XVI*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisbon: Edições Colibri-Campo Arqueológico de Mértola, 2013: 199-208; Bernal, Ángel. "La frontera en la Extremadura histórica medieval: convivencia y enfrentamientos bélicos", *II Estudios de Frontera. Actividad y vida en la Frontera (Alcalá la Real, 19-22 de noviembre de 1997)*. Jaen: Diputación Provincial, 1998: 125-138; Castillo, Juan Carlos. "Sistemas fronterizos en la Campiña Giennense". *Arqueología Espacial*, 13 (1989): 207-218; Clemente, Julián. "La Extremadura musulmana (1142-1248). Organización defensiva y sociedad". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 24 (1994): 647-701; Clemente, Julián; Montaña, Juan Luis de la. "La Extremadura cristiana (1142-1230). Ocupación del espacio y transformaciones socioeconómicas". *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos*, 21 (1994): 87-103; Galbán, Carlos J. "En ese país que por siglos fue el final de la tierra. Una aproximación a los orígenes del sistema castral del obispado de Iria-Santiago (ss. IX-XI)". *Territorio, Sociedad y Poder*, 8 (2013): 85-103; García Fitz, Francisco. "La defensa de la frontera del Bajo Guadalquivir ante las invasiones benimerines del siglo XIII", *Relaciones de la Península Ibérica con el Magreb (siglos XIII-XVI)*, Mercedes García Arenal, María Jesús Viguera, eds. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1988: 275-325; García Fitz, Francisco. "Fortificaciones, fronteras y sistemas defensivos en al-Andalus, siglos XI al XIII", *Actas del Congreso Internacional sobre "Fortificaciones en al-Andalus" (Algeciras, 29-30 noviembre y 1 diciembre 1996)*. Algeciras: Ayuntamiento de Algeciras-Fundación Municipal de Cultura "José Luis Cano", 1998: 269-280; García Fitz, Francisco. "Guerra y fortificaciones en la Plena Edad Media peninsular: Una reflexión en torno a la existencia y funcionalidad bélica de los 'sistemas defensivos'", *V Estudios de Frontera. Funciones de la red castral fronteriza (Alcalá la Real, 14-15 de noviembre de 2003)*. Jaen: Diputación Provincial, 2004: 223-242; García Fitz, Francisco. "El sistema castral sevillano en la Baja Edad Media", *Fortificações e Território na Península Ibérica e no Magreb - Séculos VI a XVI*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisbon: Edições Colibri-Campo Arqueológico de Mértola, 2013: 569-588; García Oliva, María Dolores. "Un espacio sin poder: la Transierra Extremeña durante la época musulmana". *Studia Historia. Historia Medieval*, 25 (2007): 89-120; Gallego, David. "Un espacio fortificado: el Campo de Montiel en tiempo de Las Navas (1150-1250)", *La Península Ibérica en tiempo de Las Navas de Tolosa*, Carlos Estepa, María Antonia Carmona, coords. Madrid: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2014: 155-166; Gutiérrez, María Victoria; Castillo, Juan Carlos. "El control del territorio en la comunidad de villa y



Studies of the great political and military expansion processes carried out by Western European society during the Middle Ages have made it clear that, with a few highly extraordinary exceptions, the great territorial conquests were the outcome of a successful strategy of annexation and storming of strongholds, as occurred in the Holy Land, for example. On the Iberian Peninsula, things were no different, as demonstrated in the aforementioned works referring to the great sieges of walled cities, or certain ones that studied in detail other, simpler, ways of conquest based on speed, working at night and acting by surprise which, as a general rule, was only successful for taking small fortifications.⁵⁶

However, while these operations are attention-grabbing, the fact remains that in the Holy Land and on the Peninsula, the ultimate fate of a siege —especially when it affected main urban centres whose annexation was decisive to the conquest of entire regions— was dependent to a great extent upon the degree of efficacy with which a long previous phase of systematic destruction of the surrounding area was carried out, based on smaller-scale raids that gradually weakened the enemy's economic, military and moral resources over months or years.

Precisely for this reason, one type of operation that had been ignored or disregarded in traditional historiography —cavalry raids, *razzia* or *algazúas* raids, for example—the immediate goal of which was often nothing more than looting, capturing some men, burning crops and devastating small farming villages, has in recent years become a subject of study in its own right. Proof has been found that in frontier

tierra de Baeza (Jaén): apuntes desde la arqueología espacial", *Fortificações e território na Península Ibérica no Magreb- Séculos VI a XVI*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisbon: Edições Colibri-Campo Arqueológico de Mértola, 2013: 227-242; Molero, Jesús M. "Sistemas de defensa y control en el Campo de San Juan: del dominio musulmán al cristiano (siglos X-XIII)", *Actas del IV Congreso de Arqueología Medieval Española (Alicante, 4-9 de octubre 1993)*. Madrid: Asociación Española de Arqueología Medieval, 1993: II, 399-405; Novoa Portela, Feliciano; Villalba, Francisco Javier. "A propósito de los 'sistemas defensivos' de fortificaciones en la Edad Media peninsular". *Espacio, tiempo y forma. Serie III, Historia medieval*, 16 (2003): 215-228; Novoa Portela, Feliciano; Villalba, Francisco Javier. "Aproximación al estudio de los sistemas defensivos de la Orden de Alcántara", *II Jornadas de Historia Medieval de Extremadura*, Julián Clemente, Juan Luis de la Montaña, coords. Cáceres: Editora Regional de Extremadura, 2005: 165-174; Ruibal, Amador. *Calatrava la Vieja. Estudio de una fortaleza medieval*. Ciudad Real: Instituto de Estudios Manchegos, 1984; Vann, Theresa. "Twelfth-Century Castile and its Frontier Strategies", *The Circle of War in the Middle Ages. Essays on Medieval Military and Naval History*, Donald J. Kagay, L. J. Andrew Villalon, eds. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999: 21-31.

56. On the frontiers of the Christian kingdoms of the peninsular West, it is possible to confirm the existence of groups of warriors specialised in taking over fortresses and surprise attacks. In this regard, undoubtedly the best known individual from this period is Gerardo Sempavor, a military commander of Portuguese origin who, thanks to these practices, during the central years of the 12th century managed to gain dominion over lands located between the Tagus and the Guadiana rivers. Lapiedra, Eva. "Giraldo Sem Pavor, Alfonso Enríquez y los almohades", *Bataliús. El reino taifa de Badajoz*, Fernando Díaz, ed. Madrid: Letrúmero, 1996: 147-158; Lapiedra, Eva. "El ardid de la escala nocturna y el engaño a los vigías: posible origen almohade de un pasaje de la toma de Santarém y de la leyenda de Giraldo sem Pavor". *Hesperia, Culturas del Mediterráneo*, 16 (2012): 69-100; Porrinas, David. "La actuación de Giraldo Sempavor a mediados del siglo XII: un estudio comparativo", *II Jornadas de Historia Medieval de Extremadura*, Julián Clemente, Juan Luis de la Montaña, coords. Cáceres: Editora Regional de Extremadura, 2005: 179-188; Pereira, Armando de Sousa. *Geraldo Sem-Pavor. Um Guerreiro de Fronteira entre Cristãos e Muçulmanos*. Porto: Fronteira do Caos, 2008.



regions this was the common way of waging war and the necessary mechanism for bringing about future annexations, and therefore these operations have now begun to be considered an integral part of the armed conflict and expansion strategies.⁵⁷

4.4 Other perspectives for analysis: military careers, warfare at sea and fate of the defeated

Moreover, in addition to the study of certain war operations, the sources have made it possible to reconstruct and analyse the war-related careers of certain monarchs⁵⁸ and the military careers of some specific individuals such as Rodrigo Díaz, El Cid, spotlighting not only the common ways and means of war used by frontier men, but also the way in which the entire frontier society approached this armed struggle against the enemy. This case is unique in that no other historical Castilian-Leonese figure has been fortunate enough to have such a wide range of sources—including his own chronicle and an epic poem—for the study of his military career.⁵⁹

57. Martínez Martínez, María: “La cabalgada: un medio de vida en la frontera murciano-granadina (siglo XIII)”. *Miscelánea Medieval Murciana*, XIII (1986): 49-62; García Fitz, Francisco. “Una frontera caliente: la guerra en las fronteras castellano-musulmanas (siglos XI-XIII)”, *Identidad y representación de la frontera en la España medieval (siglos XI-XIV)*, Carlos de Ayala, Pascal Buresi, Philippe Josserand, eds. Madrid: Casa de Velázquez-Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2001:159-179; Torres, Margarita. *El Cid y otros señores de la guerra*. Leon: Universidad de León, 2000; Alvira, Martín. “Prendiendo el fuego de la guerra. Operaciones militares en las fronteras cristiano-almohades entre 1209 y 1211”, *Iglesia, Guerra y Monarquía en la Edad Media: Miscelánea de estudios medievales*, José Peña, Manuel Alejandro Rodríguez, eds. Madrid: CEU Ediciones, 2014: 139-192.

58. For example, see: Ruiz, Francisco. “La dimensión bélico-territorial del reinado de Alfonso VIII de Castilla (1158-1214)”, *1212, un año, un reinado, un tiempo de despegue. XXIII Semana de Estudios Medievales (Nájera, 30 de julio al 3 de agosto de 2012)*, Esther López Ojeda, coord. Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2013: 139-169; Ayala, Carlos. “Fernando III: figura, significado y contexto en tiempo de cruzada”, *Fernando III, tiempo de cruzada*, Carlos de Ayala, Martín Ríos, eds. Madrid-Mexico: Sílex-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2012: 17-91.

59. Corral, José Luis. “Método arqueológico y cantares de gesta”, *Simposio Internacional: El Cid en el Valle del Jalón (Ateca - Calatayud, 7-10 de octubre de 1989)*. Calatayud: Institución Fernando el Católico, 1991: 31-46; Corral, José Luis. “Realidad y ficción en el Poema del Cid: historia, literatura y arqueología”, *El Cid Histórico y el Cid en la Leyenda*, Salustiano Moreta, ed. El Burgo de Osma: Ayuntamiento de El Burgo de Osma, 2000: 93-126; García Fitz, Francisco. “El Cid y la guerra”, *Actas del Congreso Internacional sobre El Cid. Poema e Historia*. Burgos: Ayuntamiento de Burgos, 2000: 383-418; García Fitz, Francisco. “War in ‘The Lay of the Cid’”. *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 10 (2012): 61-87; Montaner, Alberto. “La toma de Alcocer en su tratamiento literario: un episodio del Cantar de Mio Cid”, *Simposio Internacional: El Cid en el Valle del Jalón (Ateca - Calatayud, 7-10 de octubre de 1989)*. Calatayud: Institución Fernando el Católico, 1991: 129-160; Montaner, Alberto. “La batalla de Tévar”, *Actas del Congreso Internacional sobre El Cid. Poema e Historia*. Burgos: Ayuntamiento de Burgos, 2000: 353-382; Montaner, Alberto; Boix, Alfonso. *Guerra en Šarq Al‘andalus: Las batallas cidianas de Morella (1084) y Cuarte (1094)*. Saragossa: Instituto de estudios islámicos de Oriente Proximo, 2005; Moreta, Salustiano. “Y el héroe tascó la hierba”, *La Guerra en la Historia. Décimas Jornadas de Estudios Históricos*. Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 1999: 28-43; Oliver, Dolores. “Las batallas del Cantar de Mio Cid desde la perspectiva de la historiografía árabe”. *Revista de Historia Militar*, 73 (1992): 15-52; Oliver, Dolores. “Una nueva interpretación de la batalla de Alcocer”. *Revista de Historia Militar*, 74 (1993): 15-44; Peña, Francisco Javier. *El Cid. Historia, leyenda y mito*. Burgos:



For obvious geographical reasons, the wars that took place in the kingdoms of Castile and Leon occurred primarily on land and therefore, except for the odd outstanding episode —i.e., the naval policy of Diego Gelmírez—, it would not be until the middle of the 13th century that a navy was created and that naval operations— recall the siege of Seville in 1248, and starting in the '90s of the 13th century, the development of the *Guerra del Estrecho*—would take on a relevant role in the panorama of war.⁶⁰

This review of studies concerning military practices would not be complete without mentioning one aspect directly related to them, which has received the attention of specialists in recent years: namely, the treatment of enemies once they are defeated. From surrender or accord to captivity and exile to indiscriminate massacre, the analysis of these consequences of armed conflicts lay before us certain customs that are sometimes considered the 'law of war' and occasionally represent the pragmatic execution of the fighters' values, prejudices, fanaticism or political or economic calculations.⁶¹

Dossoles, 2000; Porrinas, David. "Una interpretación del significado de Campeador: el Señor del Campo de Batalla". *Norba. Revista de historia*, 16/1 (1996-2003): 257-276; Porrinas, David. "La percepción de la guerra del *Poema de Mío Cid*: entre la realidad y la distorsión". *Revista de Historia Militar*, 94 (2003): 163-204; Torres, Margarita. *El Cid y otros señores de la guerra...*

60. Besides the classic studies on this subject, in recent years, in addition to the PhD thesis by García de Castro (García de Castro, Francisco Javier. *La marina de guerra de la Corona de Castilla en la Baja Edad Media. Desde sus orígenes hasta el reinado de Enrique IV*. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid (PhD Dissertation), 2011; published by the University of Valladolid in 2014: García de Castro, Francisco Javier. *La marina de guerra de la Corona de Castilla en la Edad Media (1248-1474)*. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 2014), the following are of note: Aznar, Eduardo. "La guerra naval en Castilla durante la Baja Edad Media". *En la España Medieval*, 32 (2009): 167-192; Calderón, José Manuel. *El almirantazgo de Castilla: historia de una institución conflictiva (1250-1560)*. Madrid: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 2003; Flores, Manuel. "La interrelación de las fronteras terrestres y marítima en el período de la Reconquista", *II Estudios de Frontera. Actividad y vida en la Frontera (Alcalá la Real, 19-22 de noviembre de 1997)*. Jaen: Diputación Provincial, 1998: 253-268; Flores, Manuel. "Una nueva orientación en la historiografía naval. El ejemplo castellano medieval y el asalto contra Salé de 1260", *La Península Ibérica entre el Mediterráneo y el Atlántico. Siglos XIII-XV*, Manuel González Jiménez, Isabel Montes, eds. Seville-Cádiz: Diputación de Cádiz-Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2006: 819-831; Rodríguez García, José Manuel. "La marina alfonsí al asalto de África, 1240-1280. Consideraciones estratégicas e historia". *Revista de Historia Naval*, 85 (2004): 27-55. See also the state of the art published by: Flores, Manuel. "Historia militar y naval española medieval. Un acercamiento al estado de la cuestión". *e-Humanista*, 10 (2008): 244-273.

61. Fierro, Maribel; García Fitz, Francisco, eds. *El cuerpo derrotado: cómo trataban musulmanes y cristianos a los enemigos vencidos (Península Ibérica, ss. VIII-XIII)*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2008; Rodríguez de la Peña, Alejandro. "Añadiendo muertos a los muertos: el destino de los vencidos en la frontera de Al-Andalus en la cronística latina plenomedieval", *Hacedores de Frontera. Estudios sobre el contexto social de la Frontera en la España medieval*, Alejandro Manuel Rodríguez de la Peña, dir. Madrid: CEU Ediciones, 2009: 27-58; Echevarría, Ana. "La política respecto al musulmán sometido y las limitaciones prácticas de la cruzada en tiempos de Fernando III (1199-1252)", *Fernando III, tiempo de cruzada tiempo de cruzada*, Carlos de Ayala, Martín Ríos, eds. Madrid-México: Sílex-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2012: 383-413. On captivity in particular, the bibliography is quite extensive, but it is worth noting at least the recent comprehensive view provided by: Calderón, José Manuel; Díaz González, Francisco Javier. *Vae Victis: Cautivos y prisioneros en la Edad Media Hispánica*. Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 2012.



4.5 Comprehensive views and comparative studies

The progressive development of the work done on medieval war and, in particular, on the ways of practising armed confrontation with the enemy led to the creation, in the mid-'90s, of a comprehensive work that offers an overall analysis of the way in which, from tactical and strategic perspectives, the territorial expansion of the kingdom of Castile-Leon took place during the central centuries of the Middle Ages, covering sieges and battles as well as raids and the war of attrition.⁶²

However, by the late '90s and the early years of the 21st century, the need was felt to offer an all-encompassing view of these subjects, which not only spanned the entire medieval history of Castile-Leon chronologically but also covered all the Christian kingdoms of the peninsula geopolitically. This meant taking the Hispanic realm as a single backdrop for the study of ways of waging war and of the Western frontier between Christianity and Islam, duly extended so that it also covered the precedents from the Visigoth period. To a certain extent, this was a return to the path set out in the late '70s by Derek Lomax,⁶³ this time applying the new approaches that were prominent twenty years later in the historiography on medieval war.

Precisely along these lines, two interesting contributions came from Italian medievalism by Alessandro Vanoli,⁶⁴ although it was Joseph O'Callaghan, with his publication between 2003 and 2014 of a monumental trilogy centring on the analysis of the conflict between Christians and Muslims in medieval Spain, who decisively contributed to this task.⁶⁵ This is compounded by the publication in 2010, under the patronage of the Spanish Royal Academy of History and the Spanish Military History Commission, of the second volume of the *Historia Militar de España*, devoted to the Middle Ages, which Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada was in charge of coordinating.⁶⁶ There is also an interesting cartographical contribution to the general process of the war against Islam on the Peninsula and the subsequent territorial expansion of the Christian kingdoms.⁶⁷

Based on what is now known, it has even been possible to create an initial comparative study of the military experience on the two frontiers of Western Christianity against Islam —on the Iberian Peninsula and in the Holy Land— to highlight the common patterns and evident differences that arise in the conquest on

62. García Fitz, Francisco. *Castilla y León frente al Islam...*

63. Lomax, Derek. *La Reconquista...* (The original version in English was published in 1978).

64. Vanoli, Alessandro. *Alle origini della Reconquista. Pratiche e immagini della guerra tra Cristianità e Islam*. Turin: Nino Aragno Editore, 2003; Vanoli, Alessandro. *La reconquista*. Bologna: Il Molino, 2009.

65. O'Callaghan, Joseph F. *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003; O'Callaghan, Joseph F. *The Gibraltar Crusade. Castile and the Battle for the Strait*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011; O'Callaghan, Joseph F. *The Las Crusade in the West. Castile and the Conquest of Granada*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

66. O'Donnell, Hugo, dir. *Historia Militar de España. II: Edad Media*, Miguel Ángel Ladero, coord. Madrid: Ediciones Laberinto-Ministerio de Defensa, 2010: II.

67. Sabaté, Flocel. *Atlas de la "Reconquista": la frontera peninsular entre los siglos VIII y XV*. Barcelona: Península, 1998.



one side and the other of the Mediterranean.⁶⁸ At the same time, more specifically, the tactical models of the military orders employed in these two settings have also been analysed in a comparative manner.⁶⁹

4.6 *Politics as the continuation of war*

At any rate, one thing that has been learned and therefore analysed in detail within this field of study is that unfriendly confrontation between kingdoms or societies was not merely a matter of war. On certain occasions, to paraphrase the well-known statement by Clausewitz which asserts that war is the continuation of politics by other means, it has been indicated that, in some contexts and certainly when dealing with the medieval Peninsula, politics are a continuation of war by other means. Thus, politics becomes a unique form of confrontation, sometimes an alternative and other times a supplement to physical combat.

Of course, forceful imposition of one party's will on the will of another is usually taken as a military challenge, but it was not unusual for politics to be used as one of a series of resources for weakening or destabilising the enemy, such that, while subjugation was not a direct result of the game of political or diplomatic relations, such relations at least contributed decisively to the ultimate defeat or conquest.

Therefore, politics is just another strategic tool in that it is used to wear down the enemy, deepening internal divisions, negotiating with dissident groups arising in the opposition, exploiting their weaknesses and permanently impoverishing the adversary by imposing agreements that involve onerous tax demands, justified as the necessary compensation for ending hostilities, for not starting them or in consideration for alleged protection against third parties.

In the middle or long term, the political exchange, taken as a strategic instrument, ends up generating tensions between rulers and subjects, breaking down social cohesion for the opposition, exhausting its possibilities of resistance and, in sum, facilitating the implementation of territorial annexation schemes. Of course, these political or diplomatic operations usually seem to be combined with the use of military force, wielded either as simple threats or a means of coercion or used as an element of direct pressure to reach profitable agreements from a political, territorial or financial viewpoint, for which reason the border between politics strictly

68. García Fitz, Francisco. "Las prácticas guerreras en el mediterráneo latino (siglos XI al XIII)", *Regards croisés sur la guerre sainte. Guerre, idéologie et religion dans l'espace méditerranéen latin (XI^e au XIII^e siècle)*, Daniel Baloup, Philippe Josserand, ed. Toulouse: Centre national de la recherche scientifique-Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, 2006: 323-358.

69. Monteiro, João Gouveia. *Entre Romanos, Cruzados e Ordens Militares. Ensaios de História Militar Antiga e Medieval*. Coimbra: Salamandra, 2010: 255-301 (Chapter: "As Ordens Militares e os modelos tácticos de combate de um e de outro lado do Mediterrâneo - uma abordagem comparada").



speaking and completely war-related action is sometimes blurred to the point of disappearance. The Castilian-Leonese experience is proof of this.⁷⁰

5. To conclude: achievements, shortcomings, limitations and risks

In view of what has been explained above, it cannot be denied that in the last twenty years considerable progress has been made in the study of warfare in the kingdoms of Castile and Leon during the High Middle Ages. However, it must be noted that this progress still has certain shortcomings that must be remedied with new studies. There is relatively detailed knowledge of the war customs and practices that were characteristic of the confrontations between Christians and Muslims, but this fact contrasts with the limited or non-existent attention paid to such customs and practices in the course of clashes between Christian kingdoms or within the kingdoms themselves, such as dynastic disputes or clashes between monarchies and the nobility, for example. From a war viewpoint, this field still awaits new contributions.⁷¹ Comparative studies with a broader scope and dimension are also urgently needed in order to establish differences and points in common with other geohistorical fields in the same period.

Despite these shortcomings, one must recognise that the progress made has been considerable. Just a little over twenty years ago, medieval military history in Spain was a topic for members of the military and was restricted to battle history. Today, it is fully part of academic medievalism, there is an internationally known bibliography that is essential reference material⁷² —although efforts to internationalise what it is already known on the Hispanic war experience are still needed—, PhD theses have

70. García Fitz, Francisco. "Alfonso X, el reino de Granada y los Banu Asquilula. Estrategias políticas de disolución durante la segunda mitad del siglo XIII". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 27/1 (1997): 215-237; García Fitz, Francisco. *Relaciones políticas y guerra. La experiencia castellano-leonesa. Siglos XI al XIII*. Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2002; García Fitz, Francisco. "Alfonso X y sus relaciones con el emirato granadino: política y guerra". *Alcanate. Revista de Estudios Alfonsies*, 4 (2004-2005): 35-77; Melo, Diego. "Conflicto y Diplomacia en el nacimiento del Emirato Nazarí de Granada". *Studi Medievali*, 54 (2014): 565-592; Rojas Gabriel, Manuel. "A Decisive Century in the Struggle against Islam in Iberia, ca. 1031-1157: Grand Strategic Perspectives", *The Medieval Way of War: Studies in Medieval Military History in Honor of Bernard S. Bachrach*, Gregory I. Halfond, ed. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015: 185-204.

71. Recently, the study of chivalry in Castile-Leon during the central centuries of the Middle Ages has highlighted the importance of clashes between Christians in the development of the chivalric ideal, and attention has focused on the need to address this type of confrontation if the aim is to have a complete image of war rather than focusing solely on the fight against the Muslims. Porrinas, David. *Guerra y caballería en la Plena Edad Media: condicionantes y actitudes bélicas. Castilla y León, siglos XI al XIII*. Caceres: Universidad de Extremadura (PhD Dissertation), 2015.

72. As an example, see the presence of the Hispanic bibliography specialised in these subjects in the four states of the art published by Claude Gaier: Gaier, Claude. "De quelques tendances actuelles de l'historiographie militaire médiévale". *Le Moyen Age*, 104/2 (1998): 291-303; Gaier, Claude. "De l'Empire romain d'Orient à la Renaissance, à travers l'histoire militaire". *Le Moyen Age*, 108/2 (2002): 345-354; Gaier, Claude. "Dire et faire la guerre au Moyen Âge". *Le Moyen Age*, 112/3 (2006): 643-655; Gaier, Claude. "De re militari... et quibusdam alii". *Le Moyen Age*, 115/3 (2009): 607-612.



been and are being written,⁷³ research projects have been and are being developed,⁷⁴ Spanish universities and research centres are constantly organising series of conferences, summer courses, study workshops, seminars and conventions on these subjects and, since 2013, one Spanish university, the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, in conjunction with the Ministry of Defence, offers a Military History Chair in which the presence of medieval studies is significant.⁷⁵

Furthermore, within this general framework of interest in military history in the academic world, certain specialised journals⁷⁶ have also appeared in recent years and a number of associations have been created for the study of the history of war.⁷⁷ However, they are closely focused on modern and contemporary periods, so the presence of medieval war experiences is limited in these publications and associations. To fill this gap, in June 2015, the *Asociación Ibérica de Historia Militar (siglos IV-XV)* [Iberian Association of Military History, 4th-15th centuries] was founded to bring together prominent Spanish and Portuguese specialists on these subjects who aspire to *dinamizar, coordinar y divulgar la investigación científica que se realiza en el mundo hispánico sobre historia militar*⁷⁸ in the period spanning from the final phase of the Roman world to the beginning of overseas expansion, to which end it intends

73. Just in the last fifteen years, more than a dozen PhD Theses have been defended at Spanish universities —the number is surely higher, but only those known to the author have been counted here— that discuss the topic of war from highly diverse perspectives and methodologies. Of course, these works do not focus solely on the kingdom of Castile-Leon, on the High Middle Ages or on the analysis of the way of waging war, but rather, they span all the Christian kingdoms on the Peninsula, a vast period going from the 11th to the 15th century and their contents and analysis methods are, as mentioned above, highly varied, but on the whole, they are proof of the robustness of these lines of research.

74. To cite just a few recent national research projects funded by the competent Ministries at the time, one might point out the one developed from 2008 to 2010 entitled *La Conducción de la Guerra (c. 950-c. 1350): planteamientos y perspectivas*, led by Manuel Rojas Gabriel, at the University of Extremadura (HUM2007-64897); the one carried out at Rovira i Virgili University by Amancio Isla Frez from 2010 to 2012 about *La guerra en los reinos cristianos peninsulares. Dinámicas sociales e ideológicas* (HAR2009-13225), which is currently being further developed (2014-2016) thanks to the project entitled *Memorias de la guerra medieval hispana* (HAR2013-45266-P); and the one developed from 2009 to 2011 at the Autonomous University of Madrid, led by Carlos de Ayala Martínez and entitled *Iglesia y legitimación del poder político. Guerra Santa y Cruzada en la Edad Media del Occidente Peninsular (1050-1250)* (HAR2008-01259/HIST), which also continued from 2012 to 2015 under the title of *Génesis y desarrollo de la guerra santa cristiana en la Edad Media del occidente peninsular (ss. X-XIV)* (HAR2012-32790).

75. This Chair has already organised two scientific meetings: *I Congreso Internacional de la Cátedra Complutense de Historia Militar*, held in Madrid from 22 to 24 October 2013 and *I Seminario Internacional de la Cátedra Extraordinaria de Historia Militar de la Universidad Complutense. Frontera y fortificación*, held in Madrid from 21 to 23 October 2014.

76. In addition to the continuing publication of *Gladius*, published by the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, the Universidad Complutense de Madrid published *Militaria. Revista de cultura militar* from 1989 to 2003, and from 2012 to the present the *Revista Universitaria de Historia Militar* has been published. *Revista Universitaria de Historia Militar* (RUHM). “Inicio”. *Revista Universitaria de Historia Militar*. 15 September 2015 <<http://ruhm.es/index.php/RUHM>>.

77. Thus the *Asociación Española de Historia Militar*, founded in 2013, has now held two conferences: *I Congreso Internacional de Historia Militar “La historia militar hoy: nuevas perspectivas”*, 28-30 May 2014 and *II Congreso Internacional de Historia Militar “Novela Histórica e Historia Militar”*, 27-29 May 2015.

78. “mobilise, coordinate and spread scientific research being done in the Hispanic world on military history”. *Associação Ibérica de História Militar, séculos IV-XVI*. “La Fundación de la Asociación Ibérica



to sponsor scientific meetings, joint publications and other activities. Notably, this includes the creation of a specialised online journal —*e-Strategica. Journal of the Iberian Association of Military History (4th-16th centuries)*—, the first issue of which will be published in 2016.⁷⁹

As Emilio Mitre recently pointed out, with his long-running experience in the subject, when one sees how many proposals there are, it gives the impression that medieval war has become quite fashionable for historiography, just as the study of social conflicts, religious dissidence and death once were. Yet this case is unique in that, just three decades ago, it was *una especie de tema maldito* in Hispanic academic medievalism.⁸⁰

It is clear, then, that the era in which the study of war was little more than a marginal phenomenon within a setting marked, precisely, by war, in which those who devoted themselves to this subject were viewed with certain mistrust by many colleagues, seems to have come to an end. The work done over the last three decades has not only made it possible to firmly place, or normalise, as it were, the military aspect of history within the field of academic medievalism, but this has also been done in connection with English-speaking and French historiography, which had been setting the pattern for this type of study. The case of Castile-Leon in the High Middle Ages is just one example of the profound historiographical renewal experienced in this field in recent times, but it would not be misleading to assert that specialised Spanish historiography, in relation to the experience of war in the other medieval Iberian kingdoms and other medieval periods, has also experienced a similar evolution.

However, this presentation must not end by giving the impression of acritical complacency: this field of study remains absent in some, but not all,⁸¹ states of the art devoted to presenting the main trends in Hispanic medievalism,⁸² which is a sign that its presence must yet be extended and influence gained in the panorama of academic medievalism. This can only be accomplished through rigour and by proving that the history of war, the history of the ways of waging war, is not only not unrelated—in content or in methodology—to historical research, but rather,

de Historia Militar (SS. IV-XVI)". *Associação Ibérica de História Militar, séculos IV-XVI*. 15 September 2015 <<http://aihmlitar.wix.com/site#!sobre-2/c1j3s>>.

79. Associação Ibérica de História Militar, séculos IV-XVI. "Página principal". *Associação Ibérica de História Militar, séculos IV-XVI*. 15 September 2015 <<http://aihmlitar.wix.com/site>>.

80. "something of a shunned topic". Mitre, Emilio. "La paz entre cristianos y el síndrome turco a fines del Medioevo. De Nicolás de Cusa a Erasmo de Rotterdam", *Guerra y paz en la Edad Media*, Ana Arranz, Pilar Rábade, Óscar Villarroel, coords. Madrid: Sílex, 2013: 55.

81. For example, see: García Fitz, Francisco. "Historia política y estructura de poder. Castilla y León", *La Historia Medieval en España. Un balance historiográfico (1968-1998)*. *Actas de la XXV Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella (14 al 18 de julio de 1998)*. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 1999: 201-220; Arias, Fernando. "The Many Histories of Medieval Spain...": 84-86.

82. Aurell, Jaume. "Tendencias recientes del medievalismo español". *Memoria y Civilización*, 11 (2008): 63-103; Menjot, Denis. "L'historiographie du moyen âge espagnol: de l'histoire de la différence à l'histoire des différences Étude et bibliographie". December 2009, *e-Spania*, 8. 15 September 2015 <<https://e-spania.revues.org/19028?lang=es#text>>.



it represents a watchtower from which to gain perspective on some of the most decisive historical features of medieval societies.

Yet in order to do this, it is essential that the study of combat must not become an isolated facet of analysis on war. Instead, it must be able to coherently and convincingly create ties to other aspects of military activity —leadership, military organisation, logistics, weaponry, justification, and so on— and, above all, to the main lines of historical dynamics, in other words, the exercise of power, possibilities and limitations of economic production, means of hierarchical and legal organisation of society, the status of technology and ideological developments, to name a few. The historiographical challenge is difficult and complex, but some of the works cited herein have soundly risen to the challenge. Even so, it is advisable to never forget that the ultimate goal of any academic research on these subjects should be to endeavour to contribute, from the perspective of war, to general historical knowledge and to avoid, at all cost, the risk of isolation, marginalism or even ‘freakiness’.



THE GOTHIC NOVEL *CURIAL E GÜELFA*: AN ERUDITE CREATION BY MILÀ I FONTANALS

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ABSTRACT

Curial e Güelfa is not a chivalric novel written in the 15th century, but a 'Gothic' novel written in the 19th century by its professed discoverer, Manuel Milà i Fontanals. The text reveals a clear portrait of its author: an erudite scholar who had read vastly, from Muntaner's *Crònica* to *Il Novellino*, from *Paris e Viana* to *Petit Jehan de Saintré*; someone familiar with the troubadours Rigaut de Berbezilh and Raimbaut de Vaqueiras; an author who had read, among many other works, Fulgentius' *Mitologiae* and Enrique de Villena's *Glosas de la Eneida*; Alfonso de la Torre's *Visión deleitable*, Manrique's *Verses* and *El cortesano* by Luis Milán. The concordances with these works make it evident that the book is a composite imitation by the highly erudite Catalan writer. Moreover, they attest to the fact that *Curial e Güelfa* can by no means have been written in the 15th century, as no writer could have had all the aforementioned works at his disposal at the time, and it was naturally impossible to read books published after the alleged date of writing of *Curial e Güelfa*.

KEYWORDS

Literary forgery, Composite imitation, Gothic novel, Traces of reading, Creative erudition.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Falsificatio litteraria, Imitatio composite, Fabula Gothica, Lecturae vestigial, Eruditio creatrix.

1. Introduction

There is a long history of erudite forgeries that includes many illustrious actors, such as Erasmus. In his classic *Forgers and Critics*, Anthony Grafton notes that:

In 1530, Erasmus published his fourth edition of the works of Saint Cyprian. This included as a stop-press supplement a treatise, *De duplici martyrio* (On the Two Forms of Martyrdom), which, as its table of contents said, was “discovered in an ancient library; may it be possible to search out other valuable works of his as well” [...]. *De duplici martyrio* was not Erasmus’ discovery but his composition; it marks an effort to find the support of the early Church for his theology at the cost—which he elsewhere insisted must never be paid—of falsifying the records of that Church. The greatest patristic scholar of the sixteenth century forged a major patristic work.¹

It took a humanist like Erasmus to create such a forged work, as only the greatest scholar on patristics could compose a convincing falsification. He was given away by how the text—his text—supported his own ideological positions, but this was precisely the point. Grafton affirms, “in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries all these practices continued”, with the falsification of texts in Romance languages adding to the forgeries of classical texts:

In the eighteenth, Thomas Chatterton and James Macpherson used the traditional means—imposition of supposedly archaic script and spelling on the one hand, the claim to have translated from inaccessible originals in an unknown language on the other—to reimagine the medieval and the premedieval history of the Gothic North itself [...]. And even sophisticated reading publics, like the early readers of Horace Walpole’s *Castle of Otranto*, a Gothic thriller supposedly reprinted from a black-letter original text in the library of an English recusant family, were fooled, perhaps not without complicity, by the convention. No form of serious forgery has ever entirely died. The artistic creation of supposedly historical documents has continued into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.²

This is the context of a Catalan novel which, though credited in all histories of literature as a 15th century work, was in reality a literary creation of the person who discovered it, the extraordinary scholar Manuel Milà i Fontanals. As with Erasmus and his *De duplici martyrio*, only such a great scholar of Romanesque literature as Milà could write a novel like *Curial e Güelfa*, which weaves together Catalan, Castilian, Provençal, French and Italian texts.

1. Grafton, Anthony. *Forgers and Critics. Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship*. London: Collins & Brown, 1990: 44-45.

2. Grafton, Anthony. *Forgers and Critics...*: 32, 34.



2. The discovery of *Curial e Güelfa*

Curial e Güelfa is a strange mixture of chivalric romance and sentimental novel that includes both mythological and allegorical passages. Its discoverer, Manuel Milà i Fontanals, described it as a *singulier mélange de gothique et de renaissance* ("strange mixture of gothic and renaissance"). After centuries of supposed total neglect and oblivion, the only manuscript including the novel appeared in the 19th century. In 1876, Milà i Fontanals published *Notes sur trois manuscrits* in *Revue de Langues Romanes*.³ In section II, *Un roman catalan*, Milà tells the story (quite fantastic in itself) of how the director of the National Library, Agustín Durán (who had passed away in 1862, quite a long time before this article was published) knew about the novel *dans ces dernières années* ("in his last years") and wrote a description, which Milà includes in his article translated in French:

*Ce livre, ou chronique chevaleresque, sans titre, parle des prouesses de Curial et de ces [sic] amours avec la noble dame Güelfa. C'est un précieux Codex, à ce qu'il paraît inédit, écrit en langue catalane. À en juger par [sic] ses lettres, sa dimension, ses marques, sa qualité de papier et même par sa reliure, il paraît avoir été écrit ou copié pendant la première moitié du XVe siècle. Il est divisé en trois livres.*⁴

As I argued in another work, it is surprising that a great erudite scholar like Milà admits that the *c'est un précieux 'Codex', à ce qu'il paraît inédit*.⁵ his cautionary tone is just not credible. He continues:

*Le langage du roman nous ferait croire à une époque un peu plus moderne; mais nous l'avons trop peu étudié pour en déduire s'il fut antérieur ou postérieur au Tirant lo Blanch, le seul roman chevaleresque de longue haleine qu'on connaisse dans la littérature catalane [...] Le langage de notre roman est élégant et correct, et son orthographe assez régulière. Nous remarquons quelques prêt[ér]ites en ba pour ua–va.*⁶

3. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. "Notes sur trois manuscrits". *Revue de Langues Romanes*, 10 (1876): 233-238.

4. "This book, or chivalric chronicle, untitled, talks about the exploits of Curial and of his loves with the noble lady Güelfa. It is a precious codex which seems unpublished and written in Catalan. According to its fonts, size, marks, paper quality and even bookbinding, it seems to have been written or copied in the first half of the 15th century. It is divided into three books". Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *Estudios sobre Historia, Lengua y Literatura de Cataluña. Obras completas*, ed. Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo. Barcelona: Librería de Álvaro Verdaguer, 1890: III, 486.

5. "this is a precious codex, which seems unpublished". Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. "Notes sur trois...": 233.

6. "The language of the novel makes us believe in slightly more modern times; but we have studied too little to deduce whether it was before or after the *Tirant lo Blanch*, the only lengthy chivalric novel we know in Catalan literature [...]. The language of our novel is elegant and proper and its spelling, fairly regular. We note some past tenses in 'ba' instead of 'ua'-'va'. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *Estudios sobre Historia, Lengua y Literatura de Cataluña...*: III, 486.



The book's language seems to take us to a more modern period; it is qualified as elegant and correct, and the orthography, as *assez régulière* ("quite regular"). Then, the author notes a bizarre detail: that some past tenses end in *-ba* (the present day termination in Spanish) instead than *-va* (the modern form in Catalan). But why was such trait referred to in describing a codex written before graphic standardisation? It is not a matter of doubting the great ability of the scholar, but rather, I would argue that by noting this, Milà was giving a hint of something else.

According to Durán, the codex seemed to have been copied in the first half of the 15th century, but the extremely erudite Milà i Fontanals notes that it is not possible to know if the work dates from before or after *Tirant*, the writing of which, according to Joanot Martorell, started in 2nd January, 1460. Even though Milà says he hardly know anything about the novel, he summarised its content and reproduced some fragments. What is more, this admirable scholar, a father of the *Renaixença*, bumps into a jewel like *Curial e Güelfa*, a book that so enriches medieval Catalan literature, and decides not to edit and diffuse it!⁷ The novel would not be published until 1901 by Antonio Rubió i Lluch. In 1991, Jaume Riera i Sans provided an explanation for this anomalous situation: *Curial e Güelfa* was a forgery authored by its supposed discoverer: Manuel Milà i Fontanals.⁸ All scholars rejected his proposal.⁹

Riera i Sans pointed at strange elements in the codex, such as the two first quires (*Quaderno primero, Segundo*) having signature marks in Spanish in the same hand that wrote the text. He also mentioned the fact, that in a warning about the text's punctuation (which greatly facilitates its reading) Ramon Aramon i Serra,¹⁰ qualified it as 'logical', and correcting himself, 'modern': *Més que puntuació lògica, es*

7. In a letter from the 3rd October 1876 written to Menéndez Pelayo, Milà writes: *En mi reciente ida a Madrid vi en la Biblioteca Nacional una traducción de la Disciplina clericalis de Pedro Alfonso, que se ha dado como traducción catalana y que yo creo que es gascona y acaso bearnesa. Ya le cursaré a V. una notita que imprimo en la Revue des Langues Romanes, acerca de este y otros dos manuscritos* ("In my recent trip to Madrid to the National Library I saw a translation of the 'Disciplina clericalis' by Pedro Alfonso, which has been explained as a Catalan translation, although I think it's Gascon or perhaps Bearnese. I will still send you a small article that I am publishing in the 'Revue des Langues Romanes', about this and two other manuscripts"). He does not even mention *Curial*, which is one of the *otros dos manuscritos*! ("two other manuscripts"). Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *Epistolari, correspondència recollida i anotada per L. Nicolau d'Olwer*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 1932: II (1875-1880), 100.

8. Riera i Sans, Jaume. "Falsos dels segles XIII, XIV i XV". *Actes del novè col·loqui internacional de Llengua i Literatura catalanes (Alacant/Elx, 9-14 de setembre de 1991)*. Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1993: 479-489.

9. Riera i Sans' opinion was immediately refuted by practically all the experts in different aspects of the subject. This refutation was based on the literary format, the language and vocabulary used and formal aspects like the spelling and binding. Among others, in this line the following works are notable: Perarnau, Josep. "El manuscrit medieval del 'Curial e Güelfa'". *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics*, 11 (1992): 363-373; Hernández, Carmen; Ruiz de Elvira, Isabel. "Estudio sobre la encuadernación del ms/9750 de la biblioteca Nacional de Madrid: 'Curial e Güelfa'". *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics*, 11 (1992): 373-377; Colon, Germà. "Una altra vegada 'atovar' en el 'Curial e Güelfa'". *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics*, 11 (1992): 378-384; Gimeno, Francisco M. "Notes d'un paleògraf a propòsit del matritensis 9750 de la Biblioteca Nacional (Curial e Güelfa)". *Caplletra*, 15 (1993): 75-87. Our study does not aim to argue with these contributions but make formal and literary arguments so far unpublished that can not be ignored.

10. *Curial e Güelfa*, ed. Ramon Aramon i Serra. Barcelona: Barcino, 1930, 3 vols. All citations are of this edition, I indicate volume and page.



*tracta d'una puntuació moderna, no per altra raó sinó perquè el copista hi passava en net un text que ja tenia els punts i comes posats a la manera actual.*¹¹

However, there is something more in the codex that indicates its 'modern Gothic' nature: the presence of the pencil. The guidelines are drawn in pencil. This can be seen perfectly at least from 52 v. to 125, where this disappears, and it is also very clear on some folios (for example, on 68, 73, 74, 81, 85 v., 102, etc.). Furthermore, together with the regular numbering of the text in pencil by a librarian, there is another sporadic, but correct, one also in pencil, that does not coincide with the former because it begins two folios before (it counts the two blank folios that precede the start of the text). Thus, we can see the following numbers in pencil: 36, 50, 81, 100, 111, 137, 171, 172, 173, 185, 191, 197, 200 and 228. The last is on the second blank folio after the end of the text and closes the codex. As is logical, this sporadic numbering, organised (always indicating two folios more than the 'official' numbering), was done before the codex was numbered by a professional. What is the sense of only numbering these solo pages? Who could have done so? These questions are essential for the material used: the pencil, an invention that only began to be used at the end of the 18th century and then more generally, in the 19th. This numbering only makes sense for the person who did it; and it would not be a supposed reader, but rather the person who was copying the text and counting the work he had done. Regarding the codex, in his edition of the *Curial*, Badia and Torró summarised that:

*Perarnau i Gimeno daten respectivament la lletra entre 1430-1440 i 1412-1465, tot posant-la en relació amb la d'altres còdexs i documents coetanis de mà catalana, propers a les oficines del mestre racional, mentre que Hernández e Ruiz estimen que el relligat del volumen és de darreries del XV o principis del XVI.*¹²

The binding is undoubtedly old. When it was restored, it was found to contain some fragments of text that seem to be the papers of some scribes' office and are written in Castilian (not in Catalan). However, it is logical that if one wants to play at making medieval manuscript, one gives it an adequate external form. The paper dates from that time, but there are over ten different watermarks in the folios, as if old papers had been collected to write the text on. I trust that modern methods of chemical analysis of the ink and paper will be used so that the material analysis of the codex confirms what the contents of the work copied in it state. I am positive

11. "More than logic punctuation, it is a modern punctuation, for no other reason than the copyist was writing a clean copy of a text that already had the full stops and commas according to current mode". Riera i Sans, Jaume. "Falsos dels segles XIII, XIV i XV...": 480.

12. "Perarnau and Gimeno respectively date the writing between 1430-1440 and 1412-1465, relating it to that of other codices and contemporary documents written in Catalan, close to the offices of the general auditor of the Crown of Aragon (mestre racional), while Hernández and Ruiz estimate that the stitching of the volume is from the end of the 15th or early 16th century". Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. "Introducció", *Curial e Güelfa*. Barcelona: Quaderns Crema, 2011: 11.



that Riera i Sans is right: *Curial e Güelfa* is a historical novel from the 19th century and not a chivalric novel from the 15th century.

3. Critical contributions about the author of the *Curial*

In the preliminary note to his 1939 edition, Aramon i Serra dates the work from *vers la meitat del segle XV* (“towards the middle of the 15th century”), and bases this on the fact that *Rubió i Lluch i Alfons Par han arribat, per camins distints, a concretar-la entre els anys 1443 i 1460*. He stresses the great erudition of the author:

Dant hi és recordat tothora amb veneració i les seves citacions són ben abundoses; elles fan de Curial e Güelfa l'obra més dantesca de la nostra literatura. Boccaccio [...] és també una font important del Curial. El Novellino proporciona a l'autor la base de l'acció principal, almenys per al segon i tercer llibres. No és possible d'oblidar, altrament, els herois del cicle bretó i altres personatges vivents en la literatura francesa; ni els autors clàssics i totes les al·lusions mitològiques; ni l'episodi del cor menjat, evocador de la vida llegendària del trobador Guillem de Cabestany, i la cançó de Richart de Barbezilh, que indiquen uns contactes amb la literatura provençal; ni les contínues referències a Guido delle Colonne.¹³

He also emphasises that *l'erudició, usada com a motiu de lluïment, l'abús de cites mitològiques, són els excessos dels que es lliuraven —amb una exageració evident— als corrents nous*;¹⁴ in other words, the Renaissance. Thus, we have before us a work written in the mid 15th century, but whose author uses compound imitation —of various literatures— like a Renaissance bee, and does so before printing could have given him access to the numerous works from various literatures that are imitated or cited in his.

Martí de Riquer dates the work between 1435 and 1462, and on talking about the profile of the author of the *Curial*, he highlights some surprising modernities in the work:

No sabem res de l'autor del Curial (potser un urgellista nostàlgic), excepte que era un hàbil escriptor i un elegant prosista [...] i fins s'atreveix amb audàcies, com aquella mena de cas

13. “Rubió i Lluch and Alfons Par have reached by different paths to accomplish it between the years 1443 and 1460”; “Dante is always remembered with veneration and his citations are abundant; they make *Curial e Güelfa* the most Dantescan work in our literature. Boccaccio [...] is also an important source for the *Curial*. The *Novellino* provides the author with the basis for the principal action, at least for the second and third books. Otherwise, it is not possible to forget the heroes of the Breton cycle and other living characters of French literature; nor the classical authors and all the mythological allusions; nor the episode of the eaten heart, evoking the legendary life of the troubadour Guillem de Cabestany, and the song of Richart de Barbezilh, that indicate contacts with Provençal literature; nor the frequent references to Guido delle Colonne”. Aramon i Serra, Ramon. “Notícia preliminar”, *Curial e Güelfa*. Barcelona: Barcino, 1930: I, 7, 11-12.

14. “erudition, used as a motif to stand out, the abuse of mythological citations, are the excesses of those who gave themselves –with evident exaggeration– to the new trends”. Aramon i Serra, Ramon. “Noticia preliminar...”: I, 13.



de telepatia que s'esdevé quan Curial, després de vèncer els acusadors de la duquessa, veu un retaule de Sant Marc i es recorda de la Güelfa, i a aquesta, en el mateix moment, però a Monferrato, se li apareix Sant Marc i li anuncia la victòria del cavaller a tan llunyanes terres. El Curial és dividit en tres llibres, i o bé es tracta d'una imperdonable distracció o bé d'una audàcia digna d'Unamuno o de Pirandello que, al tercer llibre, Melchior del Pando digui a Curial, parlant-li en estil directe: "E faç conclusió que millor partit te'n portes que no leixes a la Güelfa, segons en l'altre llibre et diguí".¹⁵

The great scholar was surprised by the audacity of the telepathy between the main characters, and the narrator's awareness—and memory—of the structure he gave to the work with the likewise 'modern' reference to what was stated in the previous book.

I must also add to these 'modernities' another: a phrase that Güelfa says to the Abbess about the *destierro* she imposes on Curial: *Lo món és gran e ample*.¹⁶ We hear that the "the world is broad and wide" in Shakespeare's tragedy of Romeo and Juliet. This is what Friar Lorenzo tells Romeo to console him for his banishment, "Hence from Verona art thou banished. / Be patient, for the world is broad and wide"; in scene III of the third act.¹⁷

In the extensive introduction to the work by Badia and Torrò in his edition, the scholars emphasise his meticulous construction:

El Curial és una obra planificada amb cura, que té ben poc a veure amb una novel·la que es va engrèixant a cop d'inventiva, penjant episodis d'un fil, com passa sovint al Tirant lo Blanc. Van ser calculades la mesura de les dimensions, la divisió en llibres, la reiteració de motius simbòlics i la cronologia interna. Cada una de les parts del Curial va encapçalada per un pròleg que indica l'abast temàtic i moral de la ficció.¹⁸

15. "We know nothing about the author of the Curial (perhaps a nostalgic Urgellist), except that he was a talented writer and an elegant prosaist [...] and even dared with audacities, like that kind of case of telepathy that happens when, after defeating the duchess' accusers, Curial sees an altarpiece of Saint Mark and is reminded of Güelfa, and she, at the same moment, but in Monferrato, sees Saint Mark before her and he announces the knight's victory in lands so distant. The Curial is divided into three books, and it is either an unpardonable distraction or an audacity worthy of Unamuno or Pirandello that, in the third book, Melchior del Pando, talking to Curial directly, says 'And I reached the conclusion that you take the best part if you don't give up the 'Güelfa, as it is stated in the other book''. Riquer, Martí de. *Literatura catalana medieval*. Barcelona: Ajuntament de Barcelona, 1972: 109.

16. "exile"; "the world is big and wide". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 170.

17. Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*. Madrid: Cátedra, 2000: 292.

18. "The Curial is a carefully planned work, one that has little to do with a novel that grows by blows of imagination, with episodes hanging by a thread, as happens often in *Tirant lo Blanc*. The measure of the dimensions, the division onto books, the reiteration of symbolic motifs and the internal chronology were calculated. Each of the parts of the Curial is headed by a prologue that indicates the thematic and moral scope of the fiction". Badia, Lola; Torrò, Jaume. "Introducció...": 19.



The scholars, on presenting the criteria for their edition, state that the prose in the story: *El Curial és escrit en una prosa treballada, clara i elegant, comprensible des del català literari actual*.¹⁹ And regarding the dating, they state that,

*La segona meitat de la dècada dels anys quaranta del segle XV, quan Alfons IV el Magnànim s'acabava d'instal·lar al tron de Nàpols (1442), podria escaure a la redacció del Curial, d'acord també amb el tracte benivolent que reben les grans cases nobles de França i dels Països Baixos, com els Anjou, els Orleans i els Borgonya, que s'havien enfrontat en la Guerra dels Cent Anys a la primera meitat del segle i que majoritàriament havien estat enemigues d'Alfons [...]. La muller del marquès de Montferrat es diu Andrea, nom de fonts que a Itàlia és masculí.*²⁰

In 2011, I published the first results of my research in *Clarín*. I signaled Joanot Martorell's *Tirant lo Blanc* as the main source for *Curial* and, by noting a connection between *Petit Jean de Saintré* and a song by Rigaut de Berbezilh, sketched the narrative scheme underpinning the work. I also listed traces of reading in *Curial* from *La Celestina*, *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes*, *El cortesano* by the Valencian author, Luis Milán, Cervantes' *El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* and *Novelas ejemplares*, and *Relaciones de la vida del escudero Marcos de Obregón*.²¹ I will leave the analysis of the presence of *Quijote* and, especially, of *Tirant lo Blanc* in *Curial* for another occasion. As it should be obvious that a 15th century work could not show clear distinctive concordances with works written after it, these traces of reading prove that the writer of *Curial* had not only read these texts, but that he was also a highly erudite scholar of Romanesque literature.

In addition to traces of texts written after the 15th century (to which I later included Walter Scott's novels),²² it is the novel's very literary concept, as a work of composite imitation, that gives away its great author, the erudite scholar Milà i Fontanals. Below, I analyse the structure of the novel to emphasise its merits. First, however, I would like to introduce a historical character, a contemporary of Milà by a few years, a General who played a role in the occupation of Barcelona by the Hundred Thousand Sons of Saint Louis (1823) and whose name was no other than *Curial*.

19. "The *Curial* is written in crafted, clear and elegant prose, understandable from current Catalan literature". Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. "Introducció...": 111.

20. "The second half of the 1440s, when Alfonso IV the Magnanimous had just taken the throne of Naples (1442), could be applicable for the writing *Curial*, in line also with the benevolent treatment received by the great noble houses of France and those of the Low Countries, like those of Anjou, Orleans and Burgundy, who had faced each other in the Hundred Year's War in the first half of the century and who had mainly been enemies of Alfonso". However, a little later, they themselves highlighted a contradiction with the Italian setting, because "the wife of the Marquis of Montferrat is called Andrea, a name that is masculine in Italy". Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. "Introducció...": 43, 46.

21. Navarro, Rosa. "Misterios en una extraña novela: 'Curial e Güelfa'". *Clarín*, 96 (2011): 3-11.

22. Navarro, Rosa. "'Curial e Güelfa', 'mélange de gothique et de Renaissance'", *El texto infinito. Tradición y reescritura en la Edad Media y el Renacimiento*, Cesc Esteve, ed. Salamanca: Sociedad de Estudios Medievales y Renacentistas, 2014: 191-225.



4. General Curial and the Fifth Division in Catalonia

Curial's name can be read on the east pillar of the *Arc de Triomphe* in the *Avenue des Champs-Élysées* in Paris, as he was one of Napoleon's generals. Philibert-Jean-Baptiste-François Curial was born in April 21st, 1774 in Saint-Pierre-d'Albigny, in the region of Savoy, which was then Italian. His paternal grandfather was a peasant, and the maternal grandfather a lawyer. Curial's father, also a lawyer, sided with the French when their troops invaded Savoy in 1792 and his two sons joined the army: one of them, our Curial, reached the highest military honours for heroism in numerous battles. He fought in as many territories as the Emperor, from Egypt to Russia, and of course, in Spain as well as Jena, Eylau, Essling, Wagra. In 1814, Napoleon named him Count of the Empire. However, Curial bade his time when the Emperor faced disgrace, and when Louis XVIII restored the monarchy, he pledged allegiance to the Bourbons. Napoleon's return from Elba interrupted his promotion and he had to wait for the Bourbon restoration to regain his appointments and obtain new honours. These included member of the Chamber of Peers, gentleman-in-waiting of the King, First Chamberlain, *Maître de la Garde-Robe*, Knight of the Orders of the Holy Spirit and Saint Michael, Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor, Knight Commander of Saint Louis, Grand Cross of the Order of Saint Ferdinand.

His health and career started to decline after an accident that occurred during the trip to Reims to attend the coronation of the new (and Ultra-royalist) King Charles X in May 1825. When the horses of the royal carriage bolted, the coach that Curial and three other nobles were riding in ran after it and, although they managed to brake the horses, the coach fell into a ditch. As a consequence, and in addition to two sunken ribs, a bullet he had got in an African battle and that had stopped in his chest apparently moved dangerously close his heart. He never recovered from the accident, but still managed to be posted to Saint-Omer with the prestigious rank of *Directeur du Camp*. He passed away on May 30th 1829.

The General participated in the war in Catalonia in 1823, when the Hundred Thousand Sons of Saint Louis (the French troops sent by Louis XVIII to help Ferdinand VII against the liberals and defenders of the Cadiz Constitution) entered Spain. The Duke of Angoulême, the later Charles X, led the French army. The invading troops were under the command of Marshal Moncey, Duke of Conegliano, and the Fifth division was led by general Curial, after whom the division took its name: 'Curial's division'.

The newspaper *Gaceta de Madrid* provides details about the military operations by the General, who had been in Spain before under Napoleon and was now serving the Bourbons. A story published on June 1st 1823, states that *el día 24 de mayo a las dos de la mañana, las tropas de la quinta división, mandadas por el teniente general conde Curial, han sido atacadas en Mataró por los generales revolucionarios Milans y Llovera. As a result:*

la quinta división no ha perdido más que tres hombres muertos y ha tenido quince heridos. El teniente general conde Curial hace el mayor elogio del valor con que las tropas de S. M.



*han sostenido el honor de nuestras armas. El resultado de este acontecimiento ha desanimado enteramente el partido revolucionario que hay en Barcelona.*²³

A *communiqué* in which Marshal Moncey announced victory over the enemy in Molins de Rei (of strategic importance for the Barcelona campaign because of its bridge over the river) to the Minister of War was published on July 19th. In it, General Curial is again presented as the one who obtained the victory and established a blockade of Barcelona: *Mientras la división Curial ejecutaba las operaciones de bloqueo, ha hecho el enemigo una salida en dos columnas, la una por Monjuí y la otra por Barcelona.* And at midnight on July 7th, Marshal Duke of Conegliano told the Secretary of State of War: *Monseñor: El movimiento sobre Barcelona de la quinta y décima división comenzará mañana 8 de julio.*²⁴

In 1835, the translation of *Memorias sobre la guerra de Cataluña, en los años 1822 y 1823* by Florencio Galli, *edecán del general Mina* was published in Barcelona. In it, Galli, from his privileged perspective on the opposing side (the Constitutional troops lead by Espoz y Mina) narrates their defeat in Catalonia. His chronicle ends with the *capitulación de Barcelona*:

Ya no existía nuestro ejército más que en el nombre, mientras se aumentaba extraordinariamente el de los enemigos. Sujetado el Aragón, pudieron las tropas del mariscal Lauriston acercarse a las de Moncey y no formar con estas, por decirlo así, más que un solo cuerpo [...]. Sosteníase en verdad vigorosamente Barcelona, y hostigábase a sus sitiadores con no interrumpidas salidas.

As their troops could not hold out, a surrender was signed, and *Tarragona y Hostalrich siguieron la suerte de Barcelona.*²⁵ General Curial's Fifth division was an important actor in all these operations.

As mentioned before, he would not have much more time after that to act in theatres of war or obtain more honors and appointments. In addition to the Arc de

23. "on 24 May at two o'clock, the troops of the fifth division, commanded by Lieutenant General Count Curial, were attacked in Mataro by revolutionary generals Milans and Llovera"; "the fifth division lost only three killed and fifteen wounded. Lieutenant General Count Curial highly praised the courage with which the troops of Your Highness maintained the honour of our arms. The result of this event has entirely discouraged the revolutionary party, which is in Barcelona". Navarro, Rosa. "El general Curial y la literatura". *Clarín*, 108 (2013): 9.

24. "While the Curial division was executing blocking operations, the enemy made an incursion in two columns, one throughout Monjuic and the other by Barcelona"; "My Lord, the movement towards Barcelona by the fifth and tenth divisions will begin tomorrow, July 8th". Navarro, Rosa. "El general Curial...": 9.

25. "aide-de-camp of General Mina"; "Capitulation of Barcelona"; "Our army was one no more than in name, while the enemies were dramatically increasing. Having taken Aragon, the troops under Marshal Lauriston could approach those of Moncey and form with these, not more than a single body, as we can say [...]. Barcelona resisted vigorously, and the besiegers suffered from frequent incursions from the city"; "Tarragona and Hostalric following the way of Barcelona". Llovera Galli, Florencio. *Memorias sobre la guerra de Cataluña, en los años 1822 y 1823*. Barcelona: Imprenta de A. Bergnes, 1835: 240-243.



Triomphe in Paris, his name coincides with the main character of *Curial e Güelfa*. Below, I analyse the structure of the novel.

5. The narrative structure and origins of *Curial e Güelfa*

The leading couple in *Curial* is modeled after *La dame des Belles-Cousines* and her young, brave and handsome *protégé*, *Petit Jehan de Saintré*, the main characters in the tale by Antoine de la Sale named after its hero and which the author dedicated to Jean d'Anjou, Duke of Calabria and Lorraine, in 1459. The Catalan novel is a love story, but it is also the story of Curial's transformation from a handsome teenager into a brave and famous errant knight. His education in knighthood is possible thanks to Güelfa, the beautiful, rich young widow of the Duke of Milan, sister of the marquis of Montferrat, who falls in love with Curial and becomes his protectress, giving him money through her advisor, Melchior de Pando. This is the main loan from *Petit Jehan de Saintré*, in which the name of the lady is not revealed (she is only designated by her royal lineage), *mais de son nom et signourie l'istoire s'en taist, à cause de ce que cy apres purrez veoir et oyr*.²⁶ Her role is played by Güelfa (which is not a proper name of a lady) who intelligently directs the courtly education, studies and battle training of the handsome adolescent until he becomes the most famous errant knight. Most of all, she continuously gives him money, which is minutely detailed: gowns, jewels and food are very present in *Curial*, a feature it shares with French novels, even more than with *Tirant*.

The two love stories begin in very similarly. In Antoine de la Sale's novel, the beautiful young widow, who does not want to remarry, decides *que vraiment elle vouloit en ce monde faire d'aucun jeune chevalier ou escuyer ung renommé homme*; she observes the custom and circumstances of all the young boys in court, *mais à la parfin sur le petit Saintré s'arresta*. Who is this little *Saintré*? The elder son of lord *Saintré* from Touraine, who, at thirteen, is serving the king of France as a page, and who sticks out among the rest for his riding, singing, dancing, *jouer à la paume*, running, and jumping, gaining the highest esteem from the king and queen, lords, ladies and the rest of the people. It is just natural, then, that the *dame des Belles-Cousines* notices him.²⁷

Güelfa is the young widow of the Duke of Milan, whom she had married at the age of thirteen. Two years later, when her husband dies, she finds herself rich and Duchess of Milan, as well as victim of her youth, as the narrator tells us: *no podent resistir als naturals apetits de la carn, qui ab continuus punyiments incessantment*

26. "nevertheless, the story tells nothing about her name and lordship, because of the reason you could after see and hear here". La Sale, Antoine de. *Le Petit Jehan de Saintré*. Paris: La Renaissance du Livre, 1911: 13.

27. "the thing she most wished in the world is to transform some young knight or squire into a famous man"; "nevertheless, she stopped over the little Saintré". La Sale, Antoine de. *Le Petit Jehan de Saintré*...: 13.



la combatien;²⁸ she thus reckons, *si per ventura ella amàs secretament algun valerós jove, puys que algun no se'n apercebés no seria desonestat*.²⁹ Remember that secrecy was the key to the love affair between the *dame* and *Petit Jehan*. Güelfa examines all those who served in the house of her brother, the Marquis of Montferrat, and chooses handsome Curial, *molt savi segons la sua edat, pensà que seria valent home si hagués ab què*. The marquis' page has the same qualities as *Petit Jehan*: *bell cantador, e après sonar esturments (de què devench molt famós), axi mateix cavalcar, trobar, dançar, júnier*.³⁰ In both stories, the good looks of the young boy compensate for his humble origins, and the lady's money enables him to attain knighthood and fame. They even share a detail: the young boy plays ball (*jeux de paume*) in front of the palace when he is not in tournaments and the lady looks down at him all the time: *Curial tot lo jorn jugava pilota davant lo palau e era per ella contínuamente mirat e vist*.³¹ This is not a rubber ball (which had then yet to be invented) but the ball of *jeux de paume*; the first time the *dame* talks to *Petit Jehan*, he is watching some players: *trouva le petit Saintré là, qui regardoit bas en la court les joueurs de paulmes jouer*.³²

Madame gives him money for his education in morality and knighthood. Their secret love affair lasts sixteen years, and she always wants to be in charge of their courtly love game. When single-handedly he decides to leave the court to pursue the great deeds of a knight, she is really upset, and only forgets him, and assuages her solitude, when she finds a new lover, a hefty country abbot.

The novel of Ghismonda and Giscardo (*Decameron*, IV, 1), cited in *Curial*, shares with these two tales the basic scheme: a beautiful young widow who, driven by her *concupiscible disidero*, seeks a youngster worthy of her love among the palace servants. She choses handsome Giscardo, who is humble, yet full of qualities. The difference is that Ghismonda depends on her father, Prince Tancredo, whereas the *dame* and Güelfa are wealthy and free women, which enables them to choose the young page but also makes it possible for him to become a famous errant knight. In addition, the tragic ending of Boccaccio's novel (the lover's heart is served to the lady as food) provides material for a dream of Curial:³³ as it is the lady herself who

28. "given that she cannot resist the natural desire of the flesh, which she combated by incessantly pricking herself". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 26. Desire is very well described in a similar way in a religious text, *Mirall dels divinals assots*, by Pere Martínez: *Lo glorios Sant Pau, tement aquest lligam que entr-ells dos [lo cors i la carn] es, e conexent les temptacions e punyiments espessos de la carn...* ("The glorious Saint Paul, knowing the link between both [the flesh and the soul], and knowing the temptations and the pricks from the flesh..."). Martínez, Pero. *Obras*, ed. Martí de Riquer. Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, 1946: 37.

29. "if she secretly loved some brave youth, it would not be dishonest if nobody knows it". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 26-27.

30. "Being very wise at his age, he could become a valiant man if he has what it takes": "beautiful singer and had learnt to play instruments (matter what made him famous), as well as riding, composing, dancing and jousting". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 30.

31. "Curial played with the ball in front of the palace all the day long, all the time being atched by her". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 47.

32. "she found the little Saintré there, given that she was watching the players of *jeux de paume* on the courtyard". De la Sale, Antoine. *Le Petit Jehan de Saintré*...: 16.

33. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 106.



gives him her heart to eat, we can see Boccaccio's motive mixed with the figure of the popular medieval allegorical figure of the pelican, as presented in numerous bestiaries. The motive of the eaten heart appears in many other texts, as in a tale in the *Novellino*, very similar to the one that would inspire the ending of *Curial* and that would provide material for the episode of the nuns, as we shall see below.

We could identify more elements in *Curial* that come from *Petit Jehan de Saintré* (for example, the mentions of Bouciquault, *Jehan le Maingre*, the Duke of Esterich and the lord of Montferrant), but I am interested now in clearly portraying the constructive scheme of the work.

If *Curial e Güelfa* starts in a evident imitation of *Petit Jehan de Saintré*, its ending takes after novel LXIV of the anonymous Italian *Novellino*, o *Cento novelle antiche*, which in turn imitated the story *Atressí con l'orifanz* by the troubadour, Ricardo de Barbesieu (Rigaut de Berbezilh), precisely the song in the Catalan novel that *Curial* composes in Africa to fulfill Güelfa's condition for forgiving him.

Güelfa is furious with *Curial* because two envious elderly people (playing the role of the *lausengier*) make her believe that, while in Paris, *Curial* has bragged about being married to her and having consummated the marriage, the reason for which she was giving him all the money he needed.³⁴ The lady swears to forgive the knight only under one condition: if the king and queen of France, all the court and all lovers, gathered in a tournament in Puig de Nostra Dona,³⁵ cry out *mercè* ("grace", "mercy") for him.³⁶ Menéndez y Pelayo noted that the *Novellino* was the source,³⁷ though he was based in his master Milà i Fontanals' work *De los trovadores en España*, as it was Milà who established the relationship between the two works and noted that the story³⁸ was a gloss of Berbezilh's song: *Atresso com l'orifanz, / que quant chai no-s pot levar / tro li autre, ab lor cridar, / de lor voz lo levon sus*.³⁹ Milà concludes,

Es de advertir que si bien la biografía de Barbesieu no habla del Puy, cuenta el hecho que motivó la poesía y, en efecto, los versos: 'E si la cortz del Puei e'l ric bobans... No-m relévan, jamais non serai sors' dan más razón a esta parte de la novela que a la biografía.

He also mentions *que el gavián que debía coger el caballero que se proponía costear la fiesta era tenido por el señor del Puy y no puesto en un asta*.⁴⁰ The hawk also appears in

34. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 269.

35. The name of this place in France transforms into its equivalent in *Curial*, Santa María del Puig, an emblematic place in the kingdom of Valencia that is referred to in Ramon Muntaner's *Crònica*.

36. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 287.

37. Menéndez Pelayo, Marcelino. *Orígenes de la novela*. Santander: Aldus, 1943: I, 390.

38. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España*. Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1966: 105-107.

39. "As the elephant, what cannot raise after falling, till the others, with their shouts, raise it". Riquer, Martí de. *Los trovadores. Historia literaria y textos*. Barcelona: Planeta, 1975: I, 290.

40. "It is noticed that although the biography of Barbesieu does not speak about the place of Puy, it explains the fact that motivated the poem and, indeed, the verses 'E si la cortz del Puei e'l ric bobans... No-m relévan, jamais non serai sors' give more reason to this part of the novel than to the biography"; "the hawk



the *Novellino*'s tale: *In quello giorno, ordinaro la festa, e poneasi uno sparviere di muda, in su un'asta*; the person who holds it in the fist is the one who wants to pay for the party.⁴¹

In the Italian novel (LXIV), the events take place in the same place, Puy de Notre Dame in Provence, and the lady ignores the knight because he has broken the proper secret of courtly love when he bragged about their love. The narrator conceals the name of the knight, —*pognamli nomme messer Alamano*—, but does give the name of the lady, *madonna Grigia*. After being dismissed, the desperate knight becomes a hermit. One day, a group of boys from Po arrive at his refuge during a hunting trip and, unaware of his true identity, tell him the story and lament the loss of the best of the knights, but also confess their hope that he will show up at the next tournament. Indeed, the knight appears in the tournament and when they see him, everybody asks him to sing. He agrees to sing only if the lady forgives him. For her part, she will only forgive him if a hundred barons, a hundred knights, a hundred ladies and a hundred maidens demand, shouting together, *mercè* ("mercy") for the knight and troubadour. In Candlemas, he goes to church and in front of everybody sings his composition *Una molto bella canzonetta*, none other than *Altresì come il leofante / quando cade, non si può levare / e li altri, al lor gridare, / di lor voce il levan suso; / e io voglio seguir quell'uso*. Upon listening to him, everybody shouts *mercè!* and the lady forgives him.⁴²

Then, Curial arrives at the tournament in Santa Maria del Puig preceded by six richly dressed pages riding horses, himself with a dark shield and *ab un falcó encapellat pintat en mig*. Approaching her, he tells the queen, the king and all those present: *Yo-us suplich que, demanant mercè, me obtengats perdó, a grans crits, de una senyora que diu que és mal contenta de mi*. Eventually, they all plead for everyone in court to shout:

*Vírats senyors e senyores en gran nombre e, finalmente, tota la cort, per part del cavaller, cridar a la senyora no coneguda: "Mercè! Mercè! Mercè!". Los crits foren tan grans que no-s oyen uns a altres; e quatre reys d'armes e molts harauts, vestits de la liurea de Curial, anàvan per tota la plaça cridant mercè, e convidant e animant les gents a cridar.*⁴³

After the general acclaim, Curial shows a black banner, but this time *ab lo falcó ja emperò desencapellat* ("with the hawk without had"). This hawk is directly related

that the knight willing to pay the party should get, belongs to the lord of Puy and it is not on a bar". Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España*....: 107.

41. "In this day, during the party, one hawk take place over the bar". *Il Novellino (Le ciento novelle antike)*, intr. Giorgio Manganelli. Milan: Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli, 1999: 4, 73.

42. "Similar to the elephant / that when it falls down, it cannot raise / and the others, throughout their screams / can raise it with the voice / and I wish follow this model". *Il Novellino*....: 75.

43. "With a hawk with hat painted in the middle"; "I request you that, through your mercy, you can earn mercy for me, with great shouts, from a lady who claims she is upset because of me"; "a large number of lords and ladies and finally, the whole court was yelling to the unknown lady: 'mercy!, mercy!, mercy!'. The shouts were so loud that one disturbed the other one; and four kings of arms and may heralds, dressed according to the line of Curial, were going throughout the square calling for mercy, and inviting and encouraging the people to do the same". *Curial e Güelfa*....: III, 242.



to the one in the story, although its function is different. Thus, the love story ends happily.

This is not the only loan from the *Novellino*. As I anticipated, tale LXII, *conta una novella di messer Roberto* whose wife, the countess, and her ladies sleep with Baligante, a very tall caretaker. The husband has him killed and *del cuore, fe fare una torta*, which he presents to the ladies to eat. When everything is known, ashamed of their behavior, they all become nuns in a monastery. However, they establish a new custom:

*Quando elli vi passasse alcuno gentiluomo con molti arnesi, ed elle il faceano invitare e facèanli grandissimo onore. E la badessa e le suore li veniano incontro e, in sul donneare, quella che più li piacesse, quella il servia ed accompagnava a tavola ed a letto.*⁴⁴

Although the humorous nuns (all of them of noble origin) that Curial and Festa find in a monastery do not go that far, they do display their gusto in welcoming the young knight and indulge in sexual jokes, especially the Abbess Yoland le Mengre, a *jove e molt bella senyora*, sister of Johan le Mengre, who had recently arrived from the court of the King of France: *Totes les monges feyen tanta festa a Curial e a Festa, e ab tanta alegria reyen, que açò era una gran meravella*.⁴⁵ Festa tells the nuns, *Yo-us veig de tal pèl, que encara esta nit jugaríets a punyades qual de vosaltres l'auria*.⁴⁶ Another illustrious nun, Johanina of Bourbon, jokingly asks Festa to exchange roles and gowns, so that she can accompany the knight as a maidservant. The ending of their stay in the monastery offers an unbelievably astonishing situation: *fet en terra un llit molt gran, totes vestides jaqueren ensems, en manera que no s'i dormí, ans tota la nit en trufes e plaers totalmente traspasaren*.⁴⁷ All the nuns and Festa in a single bed, having fun all night *en trufas e plaers*! When Curial and Festa meet the nuns again, we find a loan from *Quijote*: *Curial viu gran pols de gents qui venien per lo camí*. He himself tells it to the knight he is about to fight: *Cavaller, yo veig gran pols e pens que sien gents qui vénen vers nosaltres*, but it is only the abbess and a group of nuns!⁴⁸ In *Quijote*,⁴⁹ according to the knight, the clouds of dust did not hide nuns but armies, which in reality turned out

44. "he told a story about master Roberto"; "it was done a cake with the heard"; "When some well-regarded man crossed there worn with good hamess, the women ordered to invite them and they gave them a great honours; and the abbess and the sisters went to find him, and this one that liked him the most, this one served to him at the table and in bed". *Il Novellino*...: 70.

45. "A young and very beautiful madam"; "all the nuns held such a big party for Curial and Festa, and they laughed with so much joy, that this was all a great delight". *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 43.

46. "I see you look so good, that I'm sure that this night you will play to decide which of you will get him". *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 44.

47. "A big bed made on the ground, all of them lay dressed together, and they did not sleep anymore, but spent all the night in entertainments and pleasures". *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 47-48.

48. "Curial saw a big dust cloud from people coming by the path"; "Knight, I see a big dust cloud and I wonder if this is people coming to us". *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 57-58.

49. Cervantes, Miguel de. *El ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1976: 92-99 (first part, chapter XVIII).



to be a flock of rams and sheep. If *Curial* surpasses the irony of *Quijote* it is because its author knew Cervantes' book very well.

The love story between Curial and Güelfa begins as the story of the *dame des Belles-Cousines* and *Petit Jehan de Saintré*, but ends as the story of *madonna Grigia* and the courteous troubadour called *messer Alamano*, with forgiveness bestowed on him thanks to the clamor for: *Mercè!* And in the middle, acting as a poetic link between the two stories, Rigaut de Belbezilh's song, which the Catalan novel credits as being composed by Curial in Africa.

Among the many other ingredients the writer mixes in his composite fable, we also find two episodes from *Paris e Viana* that we now summarise.

6. Two episodes from *Paris e Viana* in *Curial e Güelfa*, and embroidery from Luis Milán's *El Cortesano*

In the times of the great emperor, Charles, king of France, son of King Pippin, the Dauphin of Viana was a noble named Godofre de Lançó, who belonged to the Emperor's lineage and was married to the daughter of the count of Flanders, with whom he had a beautiful daughter called Viana. A handsome young knight called Paris, *molt gran sonador e cantador* ("very great musician and singer") and skilled in hunting and arms, falls in love with her; but being the son of micer Jacobo, a nobleman who lived in the lands of the Dauphin, he lacked the status of Viana. The young man thus began his courtly siege of the lady incognito, first by means of singing and music, and later by military exercise. He seduces her and wins many victories, but still does not reveal his identity.

Viana ignores the name of this young man who admires her so. After winning a tournament in Paris, Paris accompanies his friend Eduardo to Bravante to see his lady, and leaves the keys of his chamber with his mother, warning her against letting anyone in. But when his father falls ill, and the Dauphine, and later his wife and daughter Viana, visit him, Paris' mother shows the castle to the ladies, including his son's room. In it, Viana discovers *una cuberta de cavall tota blanca*, which she recognizes as belonging to Paris. Flustered and nearly fainting, she asks Paris' mother if she can rest for a while. Left alone with her maid and friend Isabel, the two enter Paris' chamber:

*Elles entraren en un estudi no gran, hon estaue la ymatge de Nostre Senyor ab lanties e canalobres d'argent. E aquí Paris se retraya per ses deuocions, e aquí era la bandera blanca e totes les joyes que ell hauia guanyades en la ciutat de Paris. Vaent Viana aquestes coses, fou certa que Paris era aquell qui tant hauia desitjat saber.*⁵⁰

50. "A horse's cover, absolutely white"; "They entered a not very large study, where there was the image of Our Lord with silver lamps and candelabras. Here, Paris harboured in his devotions, and here it was the white flang and the whole jewels he won in the city of Paris. Viana, seeing all these items, believed



Viana takes some jewels to have an excuse to come back and talk to him to confirm what she already knows: that he is the unknown knight. Viana's entrance in the chamber is thus purposeful: the recognition of Paris as the knight who has served her so well.

There are two similar scenes in *Curial*. The first takes place at the Duke of Bavaria's castle. After dinner, the duke refuses Curial's departure, *ans en la cambra on Laquesis dormir solia, molt ricamente aparellada, ordonà que dormís*.⁵¹ The duchess invites him to sleep in the bed of her daughter Laquesis: *Curial, vets ací lo llit de Laquesis; dormits bé e guardats-vos que no somiets algun mal*. In the chamber there is an altar: *Havia en aquesta cambra un altar a una part, ab un retaule de mossenyor sant March, molt finamente acabat; he remembers Güelfa, and guiltily, kneels and cries in front of the altar*. But his sorrow is short-lived: *Llevant-se del altar, se'anà al llit, lo qual era molt ricamente cubert d'un cubertor tot blanch, de domàs forrat de herminis, brodat d'ulls e de llaços d'or, segons era la roba de Laquesis. D'aquest mateix domàs eren les cortines, en aquesta matexa forma brodats*.⁵² Then he sees a boudoir *en la qual havia un altre llit molt bell e ricós, sobre-l qual trobà totes les joyes de Laquesis*; he inspects the jewels one by one during almost all night, amazed at so much wealth.⁵³

The second scene occurs shortly after in Montserrat, the monastery of the abbess. There, the Catalan knights who fight alongside Curial use Güelfa's chamber. Curial and Melchior are the first to arrive, and the nuns welcome them with a procession *e anaren ab ells a la esgleya cantant ymnes devots, e après anarense'n a la cambra on la Güelfa solia estar*. Curial sleeps in Güelfa's bed, but before he goes to *l'altar de mossenyor sant March on la Güelfa s'agenyollava per dir oració, agenollà's tantost e, feta oració, se'n vench al llit de la Güelfa, e mirant-lo sospirà*.⁵⁴ The abbess tells Güelfa the next day: *En vostre llit ha dormit esta nit*.⁵⁵

In *Paris e Viana*, their use as anagnorisis justifies the bed and the gaze upon the jewels; conversely, in the imitation of the scene that appears in *Curial e Güelfa*, there is a modern ironic tone, the same that pervades and defines the novel.

The two stories share another important element. Returning from seven years of imprisonment in Africa, Curial goes to Monferrat. There, instead of announcing

that it was Paris who she so wished to know". *Paris e Viana. Histories d'altre temps*, ed. Ramon Miquel y Planas. Barcelona: Nova Biblioteca Catalana, 1910: 96.

51. "instead, he ordered that he slept in the room where Laquesis used to sleep, very well prepared". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 101.

52. "Curial, see here the bed of Laquesis, sleep well and try not to have any nightmares"; "somewhere on one side of this room there was an altar and an alterpiece of Saint March, very finely finished"; "rising from the altar, he went to bed, what was richly covered by an all white cover, made of damask with ermine, embroidered with gold bonds, as were Laquesis' clothes. The curtains were the same damask, and with the same embroideries". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 103.

53. "there were another bed very beautiful and rich, where he found the all Laquesis' jewels". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 104.

54. "and they went with them to the church, singing hymns and after they went to the room where Güelfa used to be"; "the altar of mylord Saint March where Güelfa kneeled to pray, he kneeled at it and, after praying, he went to Güelfa's bed, and looking at it, sighed". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 173.

55. "He has slept this night in your bed". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 175.



himself to Güelfa, he joins a group of beggars asking for leftovers at the palace gates. With his loyal Galcerán de Mediona, Curial sings his song. The fame of the singing beggars reaches the marquis and he refers it to his sister Güelfa, who wants to hear them. She does not recognise a poor, bearded Curial, who calls himself Johan, says he is from Normandy, and, even more, speaks French! The lady asks him to recite the song, *que li digués de paraula* (Milà, as a great specialist in folk culture, knows very well that one may know how to sing a song but not to recite its lyrics) and he obliges.⁵⁶ After listening to him, Güelfa inquires about its author and Curial says that he learnt it in Tunisia. When the lady confesses that she knows who composed it, Curial finds a way to identify himself and speaks in the Lombard language, the only way she can recognise him.

In *Paris e Viana*, Paris and his friend Adoardo sings under the window of the beautiful Viana, *sonauen e cantauen marauellosament*.⁵⁷ They manage to flee from the ten men sent by the Dauphin to catch them. If we connect this episode to Paris' return from Alexandria, it is evident that the story is one of the sources for Curial. The young man has freed his beloved father and in return, he asks to marry her, though he remains incognito. A monk who only speaks *morisch* accompanies him; nobody recognises him, not even his friend Adoardo. In front of Viana, he shuts up and only the monk speaks; he only reveals his true identity by means of the ring she had given to him, and only after she sees the ring does he start to speak and confess his identity: *E Viana, que estaua marauellada del diamant, fon mes marauellada com hoy parlar aquell qui james hauia parlat, en tant, que estech spantada*.⁵⁸

As an example of Milà's work of marquetry with his different sources, let me note the embroidery on the white damasked quilt that covers the bed where Curial sleeps: *brodat d'ulls e de llaços d'or, segons era la roba de Laquesís. D'aquest mateix domàs eren les cortines, en aquesta matexa forma brodats*,⁵⁹ previously described like this: *una roba de domàs blanch forrada de herminis, tota brodada d'ulls, dels quals exien laços d'or fets en diverses maneres*.⁶⁰

An infatuated Laquesís gifts him a gown and asks him to make shirts with it —*jupons*— which Curial would wear all the time. When Güelfa learns this, she becomes very jealous and demands that Curial hand the shirts and Laquesís' bed cover (we did not know that he had it) to her. Then, Güelfa, *secretament, mès mans a fer una tenda d'aquells paraments de cortines* gives them as a present to Boca de Far,⁶¹ Curial's opponent, who courts her. No other novel makes more of a cloth! It is fair to acknowledge that the idea of the embroidered eyes and buttonholes is Valencian

56. "to say it in words". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 167.

57. "they played and sang fantastically". *Paris e Viana*...: 84.

58. "And Viana, who was astonished because of the diamond, became more astonished when she heard him speak what has never before been spoken, and she got scared". *Paris e Viana*...: 125-126.

59. "embroidered with gold bonds, like Laquesís' dress. The curtains were the same damask, and with the same embroideries". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 103.

60. "a dress of damask with ermine, absolutely embroidered with eyes, which had gold bonds, made in different forms". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 99.

61. "secretely, she made an effort to do a tent with these items of the courtain". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 159.



and not German; in Luis Milán's *El cortesano*, a knight representing Desire appears very well dressed, with a *terciopelo carmesí, con unos ojos en blanco mirando al cielo, broslados entre muchas alas de oro de martillo, esmaltadas, y en un sombrero de lo mismo traía este mote que decía: 'El deseo siempre vela, mira y vuela'*.⁶² There was a golden wing in the Duke of Orleans' banner, for a reason known to all: *Lo duch d'Orleans vench avant ab un standart vert e una ala d'or, e tothom pronusticà que, per ço com Laquesis era alamanya, feya aquella ala*.⁶³

We find a damasked bed cover like the one in *El Cortesano* by Luis Milán covering the bed in *Paris e Viana* and in *Curial e Güelfa*: the quilt in such an interesting 'Gothic' work as *Curial e Güelfa* is made with ideas from many different texts that make up an erudite marquetry.

7. Troubadours and other characters that appear in the novel

Apart from Rigaut de Belbezilh and his song, there is another troubadour who makes it into the story: Raimbaut de Vaqueiras (1180-1205). We find evidence of this in his 'Life':

Raembautz de Vaqueiras si fo fillz d'un paubre cavaillier de Proensa, del castel de Vaqueiras, que avia nom Peirors, qu'era tengutz per mat. En Raembautz si se fetz joglar et estet longua saison ab lo prince d'Aurenga, Guillem del Baus [...]. E venc s'en Monferrat, a miser lo marques Bonifaci. Et estet en sa cort lonc temps. E crec si de sen e d'armas e de trobar. Et enamoret se de la serror del marques, que avia nom ma dompna Beatritz.⁶⁴

Son of a poor knight from Provence, this troubadour fell in love with the sister of the marquis of Montferrat, Beatriz (according to Riquer, she was not the sister but a daughter of the marquis, but Milà did not know this detail).⁶⁵ It concords

62. "crimson velvet, with white eyes looking at the sky, placed between wings done in hammered gold, enameled and crowned by a hat showing a motto that stated: 'the desire always looks for, watches and flies'". Milán, Luis. *El cortesano*, ed. Marqués de la Fuensanta del Valle; José Sancho Rayón. Madrid: Colección de libros españoles raros o curiosos, 1874: 378.

63. "The Duke of Orleans went ahead with a green standard and a gold wing, and everybody wondered what, given that Lasquesis was German, she was doing there". *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 130.

64. "Raimbaut de Vaqueiras was the son of a poor knight of Provence from the castle of Vaqueiras, whose name was Peiror, who was seen as a fool. Raimbaut became a jongleur and lived a long time with the Prince of Aurenga, Guilhem dels Baus [...]. And he went to Monferrato, to see my lord the Marquis. And he spent a long time in his court. And he improved in sense, arms and composing. And he fell in love with the sister of the Marquis, who was my madam Beatriz". *Los trovadores*...: II, 815.

65. Canto IV of *Comedia de la gloria d'amor* by Fra Rocabertí (Bernat Hug de Rocabertí. "Comedia de la gloria d'amor", *Essai sur la littérature catalane*, ed. François Roman Cambouliu. Paris: Durand, 1858: 110-176) refers to Gismunda and Guiscard—the characters of the first novel of the fourth day of Decameron, mentioned by Laquesis in *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 201, 205)—and right after: *Alsant los ulls io viu quasi torrat / estar d'amor N'Rambau de Vaqueres / e Beatriz nobla de Montferrat* ("Raing the eyes, I saw almost toasted, / being in love Ramau de Vaqueres / and Beatriz, noble woman of Montferrat"). Milà notes the



with the story of Curial but for a small detail, which can be explained by the strong admiration of the great Catalan erudite for the Guelph author Dante: Beatriz is Beatrice Portinari, the lady celebrated by Dante; that is, she is a Guelph (Güelfa). Could this explain why the female character of the novel does not have a proper name?

The *razó* that accompanies the most famous Provençal estampie, *Kalenda Maia* in Vaqueiras, is even more significant:

Ben avetz auzit de Rambaut qí el fo ni don, et si com el fo fait cavalier del marques de Monferrat, et com el s'entendeia en ma dompna Biatrix et vivía jausen per lo so amor. Et aujatz com el ac um pauc de temps gran tristessa. Et aiso fon per la falsa jen envejosa a cui nom plasia amrs ni dopneis, qe dizion paraolas a ma dompna Biatrix et encontra las autras dompnas, dicen aisi: 'Qí es aquest Rambautz de Vaqera, siot lo marques l'a fait cavalier? Et si va entendre en tan auta dompna con voz o ez! Sapchatz qe no-n vos es onor, ni a vos ni al marques'. Et tan disseron mal, qe d'una part qe d'autra (si con fan las avols genz), que madompna Biatrix s'en corecet contra Rambaut de Vaqera.⁶⁶

Another detail of this loan from the troubadours is that, at the end of the novel, the king of France bestows *lo principat d'Oreng on Curial*,⁶⁷ and Vaqueiras is, according to Martí de Riquer, *localidad provenzal cuyo castillo pertenecía al linaje de los Baus, a la sazón príncipes de Aurenga (Orange), en cuya corte, según afirma la Vida pero no confirman otras fuentes, Raimbaut ejerció la juglaría e inició su obra como poeta*.⁶⁸ Thus Curial, after copying his life in fiction, ends up being from the prince of Raimbaut's birthplace (and, we can assume, also lord of 'Milà').

In *De los trovadores en España*, Milà i Fontanals says that *Rambaldo de Vaqueiras (1180-1207) fue trovador y compañero de armas de Bonifacio, marqués de Montferrat, a quien siguió en expediciones oscuras y gloriosas*,⁶⁹ however, a little later, he mistakes the

work of *comendador Rocabertí: donde se introducen, 'como en el trionfo d'amore', varios personajes víctimas de su pasión* ("where different personages victims of their passir were introduced, as in the *trionfo d'amore*"), and cites this stanza in: *De los trovadores en España...*: 455.

66. "You have well heart who was Raimbaut and from where and how he was created Knight by the Marquis of Monferrato, and how he was fallen in love with my lady Beatriz and he lived content because of her love. And hear how he became immensely sad during a few time. And this was because dishonest people who did not like love and gallantry said to my lady Beatriz, staying among madames, words like the following: 'Who is this Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, although the Marquis had made him Knight? And he dared to fall in love with such a high Lady as you! You must know that this is not honourable for you nor for the Marquis'. And so bad words said in one and another place (as usual in the perverse people), that my Madam Beatriz became annoyed with Raimbaut de Vaqueiras". Riquer, Martí de. *Los trovadores...*: II, 834-835.

67. "the Principality of Orange". *Curial e Güelfa...*: III, 249.

68. "town in Provence, whose castle belonged to the Baus lineage, then princes of Aurenga (Orange), in whose court Raimbaut played as jongleur and started as a poet, according to the 'Life', although it is not stated by any other source". Riquer, Martí de. *Los trovadores...*: II, 811.

69. "Raimbaldo de Vaquerias (1180-1207) was jongleur and brother in arms of Guillermo IV of Baucio, count of Orange; he shows up linked to his lord by the same devoted and enthousiastic friendship that after he gave to his brother in arms Conrado de Montferrat". Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España...*: 47.



name of the marquis for his brother's: *Este poeta, amigo y servidor de Guillermo IV de Baucio, conde de Orange, se muestra unido a su señor con aquella amistad fiel y entusiasta de que dio más tarde nuevas muestras de su hermandad de armas con Conrado de Montferra*.⁷⁰

This blunder by a great scholar, mistaking Bonifacio with his brother Conrado,⁷¹ links his literary adventures in the Holy Land with Walter Scott, one of the authors Milà admired most.⁷²

In *Poetas catalanes del siglo XIV* (published in 1862), Milà i Fontanals discusses Pere de Queralt, who was *armado caballero en 1399 en la coronación de don Martín, quien en el mismo año y en 1401 confióle importantes comisiones cerca del rey de Túnez*. He continues:

Cuéntase que esta amistad nació de la siguiente manera: habiendo sido hecho Pere prisionero de los moros, quisieron estos convencerse de si su arrojo respondía realmente al sobrenombre que todos le daban, cor de roure, y así obligáronle a luchar con un león, al cual dio muerte el caballero catalán con un puñal. Esta hazaña, que le valió la libertad, hallábase representada en tres distintos lugares del monasterio de la Merced de Santa Coloma de Queralt y dio ocasión a que la ilustre familia del héroe adoptase por nuevas armas un león rampante en campo rojo, atravesado el pecho con un puñal.⁷³

This fragment already presents part of Curial's adventures in Africa. To find others, we can read Milà's *De los trovadores en España*, where he refers to the brother of King Alfonso X the Wise, *que se dio a conocer en Europa por su vida inquieta y aventurera*:

El infante D. Enrique, hermano del rey, vencido en 1259 por D. Nuño de Lara, alcaide de Jerez, que envió el rey contra el infante rebelde, se refugió en Túnez, donde permaneció algunos años sirviendo al rey moro, hecho mencionado en unos de los serventesios de Ramon de Lator de Marsella.

70. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España*....: 85.

71. Milà himself noted that the main character of the fifth novel of the first day in the *Decameron* is Conrado's first wife: *El marqués de Monferrato, hombre de gran valía, gonfalonero de la Iglesia, había pasado a ultramar en una gran expedición armada hecha por los cristianos* ("The Marquis of Monferrato, a man of great worth, gonfaloniere of the Church, had gone overseas on a large armed expedition made by Christians"); she became a widow after his participation in that crusade (historical data serves although it is not exact). Boccaccio, Giovanni. *Decamerón*, ed. María Hernández. Madrid: Cátedra, 1994: 180.

72. Coll-Vinent, Sílvia. "Walter Scott en Milà i Fontanals, o la influència del 'Romanticisme saludable' (1839-1854)", *El llegat Milà i Fontanals a la biblioteca pública episcopal de Barcelona*, Sílvia Coll-Vinent, Isabel de Colmenares, eds. Barcelona: Universitat Ramon Llull, 2011: 89-116.

73. "Became a knight in 1399, during the coronation of *don Martin*, who in the same year and in 1401 gave him important missions before the king of Tunisia"; "It is said that this friendship was born as following: after Pere being taken prisoner by the Moors, they wished to find out whether his bravery was coherent with his nickname he was known by everybody: heart of oak; and so he was forced to fight a lion, which was killed by the Catalan knight with a knife. This great feat is explained in three different places of the Monastery of the Mercy in Santa Coloma de Queralt, and it earned freedom for the Knight and allowed the distinguished family of the hero to use a shield showing a rampant lion with a knife in its heart on a red field". Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *Estudios sobre Historia, Lengua y Literatura de Cataluña. Obras completas*, ed. Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo. Barcelona: Librería de Álvaro Verdaguier, 1890: III, 330.



He later served Charles of Anjou and took part in the battle of Benevento (1265), in which Charles obtained Naples and Sicily. *Y al año siguiente se unió con su hermano Fadrique, que seguía el partido de Conradino.*⁷⁴

It is not strange that *don* Enrique de Castilla defended Curial when the later was in the lions' pit: *...un cavaller d'Espanya, qui don Henrich de Castella havia nom e tenia mil rocins de christians e gatges del rey, suplicà al rey que fes aquella gràcia a-N Ramon Folch,*⁷⁵ the said grace being the freedom of Curial.

We should not be surprised either by the fact that the opponent of Aznar de Atrosillo was the knight, Guillalmes de la Tor, the same name as the troubadour Guilhem de la Tor (*circa* 1216-*circa* 1233), who, though born in Périgord, moved to Lombardy. In Milan, he fell in love with the young wife of a barber, whom he kidnapped and took to Como. Legend (or his Life) has it that grief took him after she passed away. Among the characters in his *Treva* we find Selvaggia and Beatrice, the two daughters of Corrado Malaspina.⁷⁶

In addition to the troubadours, in *Curial* we also find traces of episodes from two Catalan chronicles seasoned with details from the Gothic novels of Walter Scott.

8. The presence of Ramon Muntaner and Bernat Desclot's Chronicles in *Curial*

The author of *Curial* had read both chronicles and found inspiration for some episodes in his novel from them. While Lola Badia and Jaume Torró have noted that there are *afinitats manifestes del Curial amb les cròniques de Desclot i de Muntaner*,⁷⁷ they did not examine how the alleged anonymous author could access these and other sources. In Desclot's *Crònica*, we read, *Com lo comte de Barcelona anà en Alemanyà, ab sol un cavaller, per excusar l'emperadriu d'Alemanyà*, an evident model for the battle of Curial and Jacob of Cleves in defence of the Empress and her first cousin Cloto, daughter of the Duke of Bavaria and Duchess of Ostalriche, who had been falsely accused of adultery. The knight Bertran de Rocabruna accompanies the

74. "he became famous in Europe thanks to his fidgety and adventurer life"; "Prince henry, brother of the king, defeated in 1259 by the alcaide of Xerez, Don Nuño de Lara, was the king sent against the rebel prince, took refuge in Tunisia, where he lived some years serving the Moorish king, which was mentioned in some poems written by Ramon de Lator of Marseille"; "And in the following year he joined his brother Fadrique, who supported the party of Conradino". Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España...*: 192-193.

75. "a knight from Spain, named Henry of Castile, who had one thousand horses of Christians and the guarantee of the king, demanded to king that he gave this grace to Ramon Folch". *Curial e Güelfa...*: III, 157.

76. Riquer, Martí de. *Los trovadores...*: II, 1171-1172. Auger Bellian, the old knight defended by Curial, has two coward sons: Perrin and Hans (*Curial e Güelfa...*: I, 57). Perrin is the name of the minstrel sent by Guirardo de Borneil to the king of Aragon. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España...*: 128.

77. "manifest affinities between *Curial* and the chronicles of Desclot and Muntaner". Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. "Introducció...": 62-65.



Count of Barcelona. Both ladies, in the gallows, with firewood at their feet, await God's judgement, which would be expressed in the victory of either the defending knight or the two accusing *lausenger*. The count of Barcelona wins, killing one of the two German knights, while the other confesses the falsity of their accusation in front of the whole court: *Jo dic davant tota la cort que ço que nós havem dit de madona l'emperadriu, dixem per enveja e per mala volentat*. The count takes the knight to the Empress: *Ab tant menà-lo hom denant l'emperadriu, qui estava en una casa de fust que hom li havia feita denant lo camp, e aquí de prop havia bastit un gran foc, que si el comte fos vençut, que fóra cremada*,⁷⁸ and she forgives him.

In *Curial*, Curial and Jacob of Cleves fight against Parrot de Sant Laydier and Othó de Cribaut, respectively, in a similar battle. Othó confesses that the duchess was innocent. But Jacob, who had made the accusation, *m'avia tret de ma honor, lançant-me de la privadesa del duch*; vengeance the reason for such terrible accusation. In this case, the scene does not end with the forgiveness of the falsely accusing knights, but with their punishment: *La duquesa fonch devallada del cadafal, e muntarent-hi los dos falsos cavallers, e encès lo foch, moriren a cruel e vergonyosa mort*.⁷⁹

Desclot also refers to the trip by Peter III to France in disguise, which is the base of the knight of the black shield in the tournament in Melun that appears in *Curial*, an episode that also appears in Ramon Muntaner's *Crònica*, to which we now turn.

The confrontation between Charles of Anjou and King Peter III for Naples and Sicily ends with the challenge of Bordeaux. As the king of England cannot guarantee the safety of the king of Aragon, he advises against going to the battle in the French city. But King Peter, who is determined to go to battle, travels under the identity of the merchant Domingo de la Figuera.

Així que nostra volentat és que aital jorn que deu ésser lo jorn qui és emprès, que siam al camp de la batalla, en Bordeu; e que nós que hi anem en persona en aital manera: que vós irets cavalcant en un bell cavall, con a senyor, e nós irem així con a escuder vostre, en un altre cavall, ab una ascona muntera en la man; e haurem En Bernat de Peratallada, qui cavalcarà en altre cavall ab una sella de trossa, e portar-vos ha la trossa, qui serà lleugera, que no hi haurà mas la vostra gramalla e diners per despesa, e portarà altra ascona muntera.⁸⁰

78. "How the Count of Barcelona went to Germany, accompanied by only one knight, to defend the Empress of Germany"; "I state in front of the whole court that this said by us regarding her Highness the Empress was said for envy and evil intention"; "In the meantime, he was shown in front of the Empress, who was in a wooden house built for her in front of the field, and in this place a big fire was made, and it was said that if the count was defeated, she would be burned". Desclot, Bernat. *Crònica*, ed. Miquel Coll i Alentorn. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1982: 68.

79. "he betrayed my honour, the reason why I lost the friendship of the duke"; "the duchess was taken out of the catafalque, and the false knights took their place and they were burned on the pyre, so they died awfully and cruelly". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 83.

80. "Our will is that in the convened day we must be on the battle field, in Bordeaux, and that I must arrive on personally in the following way: you will go riding a good horse, as a lord, and I will go as your squire on another horse, with a short lance in my hand; we will meet Bernat de Perratallada, who will ride another horse, with a light saddlebag to carry just the good dress and money for the travel, and also he will carry another short lance". Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*, ed. Marina Gustà, Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1979: I, 138.



This they did, and when the king arrived at the battlefield, he sent his emissary, Gilabert de Cruïlles, to look for the seneschal and tell him that a knight of the king of Aragon wanted to talk to him and requesting him to come with a notary and six knights. These would act as witnesses (and a scribe will write it all down) to the presence of the king of Aragon on the battlefield on the set day. The king only revealed his identity at the precise moment, after which he returned to Aragon immediately, in the same way, but this time taking a route through Castile.⁸¹

This trip of the king of Aragon is behind the episode of the same Peter III in France for the tournament in Melun that appears in *Curial*. The narrator follows the arrival of the king, who conceals his identity as an errant knight:

En aquest mateix temps, lo rey d'Aragó, que tres mesos o més havia cavalcant contínuament, a forma de cavaller errant e, sens ésser estar conegut, havia fetes coses de son cors dignes de recordable veneració (e, sinó que no-s pertany a nostra matèria tractar sinó dels fets de Curial, yo scriuria ací alguns notables actes qui són venguts a notícia mia, los quals per les sues valeroses mans foren finats a honor sua, no menors ne de menor perill que aquells que de sus havets legits), tramès les sues tendes al camp (no riques, per ço que les endes no-l descobrissen), e manà que fossen fermades en lo pus desviable loch que s'i trobàs; e axí fonch fet.⁸²

The knights from Aragon, who are accompanying Curial, recognise his king, ask him to admit Curial to his company, and the king obliges; travelling together, they will be known as the knights of the black shield. There is even a mention of Charles of Anjou:

E lo rey, qui havia un poch lo ventrell gros contra-ls franceses, per rahó del duch d'Anjou, qui havia mort son sogre, mirà vers aquella part on los angleses rompien lances contra-ls franceses, e axí, lo rey ficà sperons al seu cavall, apellat Pompeu, e sí anà vers lo duch d'Orleans.⁸³

His actuation in the tournament next to young Curial has yet another source: Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. The main characters of this Gothic novel are two errant knights who conceal their identities: although *Ivanhoe* reveals it soon, the Black

81. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...* I, 141-142, 146.

82. "At that same time, the King of Aragon, after riding continuously for three months or more, like an errant knight and, without being recognised, had done deeds with his body worthy of recordable veneration (which I don't explain because our matter consists in dealing with the events in *Curial*, although I would write here some notable acts that have come to my notice, which are honourably done by his hands and they are not menor nor less dangerous than those acts you have read above). He sent the tents to the field (which were not rich in order not be uncovered) and he ordered that they were established in a discreet place, as it was done". *Curial e Güelfa...* II, 110-111.

83. "And the king, who was annoyed with the French, because of the Duke of Anjou, who had killed his father-in law, looked to that place where the English were standing up against the French, and so, the king spurred on his horse, called Pompeu, and he rode towards the Duke of Orleans". *Curial e Güelfa...* II, 114.



Knight will only abandon his anonymity at the end of the story: he is Richard the Lionheart.

When the young knight appears at the tournament organised by prince John, people only see a rather thin knight of medium height, riding a dashing black horse, *his suit of armour was formed of steel, richly inlaid with gold, and the device on his shield was a young oaktree pulled up the roots, with the Spanish word Desdichado, signifying Disinherited*.⁸⁴

During a melee, the knight is hard pressed by Brian de Bois-Guilbert, Athelstane and Front-de Boeuf. At this point, a warrior from his entourage, clad in black armour and riding a robust black horse, without any ensign on his shield, comes to his help, knocking over two of the opponents and evening up the fight for the hero, who wins the tournament in Ashby-de-la-Zouche and reveals his identity when he removes his helmet, fainting. The Black Knight appears in the tale and his identity gradually becomes known, first only by some characters and eventually by everybody.

In *Curial*, all the knights that accompany the king of Aragon at the tournament in Melun have the same black shield with an ensign on it, although the comedy that characterises *Curial* can be perceived in the fact that the narrator says that *per ventura mal pintada, per ço que a la brevitat del temps no consentia que millor se fes*.⁸⁵ The black shield becomes so much connected to this group of knights that the Duke of Orleans,⁸⁶ playing a little trick (something really astonishing among errant knights!), takes a black shield to Laquesis for her to touch so that he can later affirm: *Yo dich que la donzella que té l'escut negre és la pus bella del món*⁸⁷ being faithful to Laquesis while everybody thinks he is praising Festa, the lady who accompanies Curial and who the knights from Aragon defend.

The knight of the black shield hurt the king of France, who has decided boldly to join the joust. After being defeated, the king is content with having broken a spear on the shield of the world's best knight. The king of Aragon is thus the bravest knight, even though Curial, who at this point is furious, *encès per rahó de un anglès qui falsamente, ab una lança, l'avia ferit*, takes part in the tournament.⁸⁸

Shortly after, the king of Aragon has to intervene like the Black Knight: attacking to defend Curial who, like Ivanhoe, is being attacked by various opponents at the same time.

At the end of book I in *Curial*, the narrator presents King Peter, *cavaller molt rebus, forts e valent, lo qual mentre visqué féu de son cors en batalles moltes coses dignes de recordable*

84. Scott, Walter. *Ivanhoe*. London: Penguin Books, 1984: 96 (first edition in 1819). Ivanhoe would thus be called the Disinherited Knight, although the Spanish word *desdichado* means "unfortunate".

85. "accidentally, bad painted, so that the brevity of time did not allow it to be done better". *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 125.

86. The Duke of Orleans is also a starring character in *Quentin Durward*, in which he fights the main character for the lady's love, as in *Curial*.

87. "I say that the girl who has the black shield is the most beautiful in the world". *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 134.

88. "furious about an Englishman who had falsely injured him with a lance". *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 139.



*veneració, axí contra sarrayns com altres gentes.*⁸⁹ He is a generous host to his subjects, the three knights from Aragon, Dalmau d'Oluge, Roger d'Oluge and Ponç d'Orcau, who had triumphed over Gerardo de Perugia, Frederico de Venosa and Salones de Verona, while Curial finished off Boca de Far.⁹⁰

Surprisingly, the king orders two of his sons to hold torches to lighten the chamber while another serves them food; they would have some rest from their 'work' only in the king's absence:

*Los altres dos fills, don Jayme e don Frederich, stigueren als caps de la taula amb sengles torxes en les mans tant com lo sopar durà; e com se enujaven acomanaven-les algun poch a cavallers notables qui de prop los staven, emperò com viandes venien o lo res venia, ells prenien les torxes.*⁹¹

The scene makes sense when compared with a wager that appears in another work by Walter Scott, *A Legend of Montrose*. Angus MacAulay sits at Sir Miles Musgrave's table, richly lit by six huge silver chandeliers. The Scottish lord is told that such riches are impossible to find in his miserable land, and in turn, he retorts that within his castle they would find more and more precious chandeliers. As he is penniless, his English guests find the following scene:

The large oaken table was spread with substantial joints of meat, and seats were placed in order for the guests. Behind every seat stood a gigantic Highlander, completely dressed and armed after the fashion of his country, holding in his right hand his drawn sword, with the point turned downwards, and in the left a blazing torch made of the bog-pine.⁹²

The English lords have to accept that these chandeliers are more valuable than Sir Musgrave's silver ones. In the hands of Milà, this anecdote becomes a lighter and funnier scene, as the mischievous youngsters do not hesitate to take a break from such a strange task.

Returning to Ramon Muntaner's *Crònica*, let me point out some other details that are recreated in *Curial*. Muntaner underscores that James of Aragon invites

89. "[a] very robust, strong and brave knight, who while he lived in his heart many memorable battles worthy of veneration, both against the Saracens and other people". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 185.

90. Undoubtedly, the name 'salones de Verona' is humorous and shows the 'modern' irony of the narrator, comparable with the name Bonifaci de Verona, cited by Muntaner in his *Crònica* (Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: II, 123, 126); in contrast, Boca de Far —so close to *Tirant's* Simon de Far— is very present in Muntaner's *Crònica* as a geographical reference: "at dawn they were in Boca de Far, before the tower of the lighthouse of Messina". Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: I, 103.

91. "The other two sons, Prince James and Prince Frederick, were at the heads of the table with torches in their hands while the supper lasted; and when they became annoyed, they gave the torches a while to a some notable knight what was closed, but they brought them when the food or the meat came". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 186.

92. Scott, Walter. *A Legend of Montrose*. ed. Jim Manis. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University, 2002: 51 (first edition was published in 1819).



the king of Castile to Valencia and does not let him spend anything: *que anc un diner no despeneren, ell ni persona qui ab ell hi fos*.⁹³ Later, when the king of Castile crosses Aragon to attend the council in Lyon, the same occurs:

E lo dit señor rei En Jacme d'Aragó e los infants hagueren gran plaer e pensaren d'ordonar per lla on començarien a entrar per llur terra entrò a Montpestller les viandes e tot ço que ops haurien. Que en tal manera dreçaren que jamés negun señor no fos tan bastat ab totes ses companyes com ell fos; e de res del dia que seria entrat en llur terra entrò que fos fora de Montpestleer, que no despés lo rei de Castella res del seu, ne persona qui ab ell fos. E així se complí tan abundadament com davant havets oït que fo fet l'altra vegada con estec al regne de València.⁹⁴

Curial behaves similarly with the two elderly *lausengier* who had caused his troubles when they visited him in Paris; he welcomes them and takes them to his hostel: *menà 'ls-se'ns a posar al seu hostal, e aquí los festejà e honrà molt, e 'ls donà tots temps, mentre allí stiguieren, tot ço que mester havien, en manera que ells no despenien res*.⁹⁵

Sanglier de Vilahir puts a black banner in front of his tent, *ab unes lettres d'or molts grans qui dehien: 'Ahur'*.⁹⁶ In his *Crònica*, Muntaner refers to how four ships from Sicily arrived to ask King Peter of Aragon for help because Charles of Anjou was besieging Messina. The knights and citizens that disembark from the ships *vengren tots vestits de negre e ab les veles negres e ab senyeres negres*⁹⁷ to ask 'mercè'; when the king grants them his help, they shout *Aür! Aür!*, the same word that the Moors cry out when they see the galleys of Corral Lança: *los sarraïns qui les veeren, que ja n'havien haüda llengua, cridaren en llur sarraïnesc: –Aür! Aür!*⁹⁸

Both texts also share the way they describe a longed for presence. In Muntaner's *Crònica*, while the king is awaited in Sicily, *e així, ab aquell guany tornà-se'n en Sicília, on tots los soldaders, així de cavall con de peu, l'esperaven així com los jueus fan Messies*;⁹⁹ for their part, the people who wait for Curial in the tournament in Santa María

93. "what has a pence that they did not spend, nor anyone who was with him". Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...* I, 36.

94. "And said lord James King of Aragon and the princes had great pleasure and they wondered the way for introducing food and whatever needed into the land till Montpellier. It was so well organized that no lord was ever as well supplied with all his companions as he was; and about the meat to need in the land until Montpellier, he ordered that the king of Castile spent nothing from his own nor anyone who was with him. It was done so faithful, that it was repeated another time when the king visited the Kingdom of Valencia". Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...* I, 49-50.

95. "ordered them to be put up in his hostel, to regale and honour them here very much, and gave them all time, while they were there, everything they had need of, so that they spent nothing". *Curial e Güelfa...* II, 213.

96. "with very big gold letters that said: 'Ahur'". *Curial e Güelfa...* II, 221.

97. "all came dressed in black with black sails and black flags". Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...* I, 94.

98. "the Saracens who saw them, which language it was heard before, shouted in there Saracen tongue: –Hurray! Hurray!". Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...* I, 46.

99. "and so, with that win they returned to Sicily, where all the soldiery, both horse and foot, awaited him like the Jews await the Messiah". Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...* II, 62.



del Puig, *Desijaven tots la venguda de Curial, pensant que aquell defendria lo restell, mas vanament lo speraven; decebuts eren com són los jueus del sperar Messies*.¹⁰⁰

The account of the Sicilian campaign in the *Crònica* mentions in different occasions the Duke of Ostelric (qui és un dels majors barons d'Alemanya),¹⁰¹ Ramon Folc de Cardona, Blascó d'Alagó, Joan Eiximinis d'Urrea,¹⁰² all of them characters that also appear in *Curial*.¹⁰³ It also mentions the Greek city of Arta,¹⁰⁴ famous for a bridge, the foundations of which, according to a popular legend, were secured thanks to the sacrifice of the wife of the master of work. Milà i Fontanals knew this legend,¹⁰⁵ which might have inspired him to give the Güelfa's maiden her first name before being called Festa, in an evident gesture to Tirant's *Plaer-de-ma vida*.

But perhaps the most relevant loan regarding names is the one of the Genoese corsair who attacks the merchant galley that takes Curial from Genoa to Alexandria: *Un cossari genovès, lo qual Ambrosino de Spíndola havia nom, hach sentiment Curial ésser molt rich, e per cobdícia d'aquella roberia, pensant que ab poch treball la hauria, mesa primeramente a punt una galera que tenia, de Portvendres partí*;¹⁰⁶ in some other occasions, he is also called 'Ambròsio de Spíndola'. The name is a funny cross between General Ambrosio de Spínola (1569-1630) and a character cited by Muntaner:

Que dementre que la companya fo partida de Gal-lípol per anar sobre los alans, l'emperador ho sabé; e fo ventura que en aquella saó vengren divuit galees de genoveses, de què era capità ser Antonio Spíndola, e era vengut de Gènova en Costastinoble per menar en Llobardia lo fill menor de l'emperador per ésser marqués de Montferrat.¹⁰⁷

The great Spanish general, of Genoese origin and governor of the Duchy of Milan, appears in the novel *I promessi sposi* by Manzoni, which Milà i Fontanals

100. "They all awaited the arrival of Curial, thinking that he would defend the castle, and they awaited him in vain; disappointed were they, like the Jews are of waiting for the Messiah". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 235.

101. "who is one of the greatest barons in Germany". Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: II, 184, 200, 204.

102. The last two knights attend the tournament in Melun: *l'altre ha nom don Blasco d'Alagó, e l'altre ha nom don Johan Ximenes de Urrea (Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 82). For his part, Ramon Folch de Cardona, the ambassador of the king of Aragon to the court of the Moorish king, intervenes in the episode of Curial fighting the lion (*Curial e Güelfa* ...: III, 153-157) and recognises Curial in Melun.

103. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: II, 55, 151.

104. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: II, 122, 152.

105. He summarises the legend in the version wrote by Vretro. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. "Cuentos y poemas de Grecia Moderna por M. Vretro", *Obras completas. Opúsculos literarios. Primera serie*, ed. Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo. Barcelona: Álvaro Verdaguier, 1892: IV, 581-584.

106. "A Genoese corsair, whose name was Ambrosino de Spíndola, suspected that Curial could be very rich, and for greed of this robbery, thinking that with little work he would have it, first prepared a galley that go away from Portvendres". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III-23-24.

107. "In a meanwhile that the company left Gallipoli to go against the Alans, the emperor knew it; and in this context eighteen Genoese galleys came, captained by Antonio Spíndola, and he came from Genoa to Constantinople to take to Lombardy the younger son of the emperor to be Marquis of Montferrat". Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: II, 99.



greatly admired. *Curial* mixes the two names, Antonio Spíndola and Ambrosio de Spínola; with the same background: Lombardy, Montferrat.

To finish this section about borrowings from Muntaner in *Curial*, I refer to the mention of the Knight *de la Cota mal tallada* ("of the badly-made dress"). After one of his frequent *Qué us en diré?* ("What can I say to you about this?"), the pet phrase that also appears in *Curial* and many other texts (from *Tristan en prose* to *Petit Jehan de Saintré*), Muntaner praises the work of the king and compares it with that of the great heroes of the knightly world, citing the aforementioned knight: *que Galeàs, ne Tristany, ne Lancelot, ne Galvany, ne Boors, ne Palamides, ne Perceval lo Galois, ne el Cavaller ab la Cota mal tallada*.¹⁰⁸ At the end of *Viatge del vescompte Ramon de Perellós i de Roda fet al Purgatori nomenat de Sant Patrici*, Ramon de Perellós also mentions him: *... arribí al port de Davre, on vi lo cap de Galvany, car aquí morí e així mateix la cota mal tallada car així s'apellava aquell cavaller que la portava*.¹⁰⁹

About the Arthurian Knight of the Badly-fitting Coat, Carlos Alvar says: *Keu acuña su sobrenombre tras presentarse el caballero en la corte de Arturo cubierto con la túnica, llena de jirones, que llevaba su padre cuando fue asesinado, prometiéndolo no quitársela hasta haber vengado esa muerte*.¹¹⁰ *Tristan en prose* begins with Lancelot going after the Knight of the Badly-fitting Coat and encountering his first adventures: *Or dist li contes que quant Lanselos se fu partis de la damoisele ki a lui estoit venue de par monsieur Tristan, ensi com je vous ai conté, il se mist tout maintenant a la voie après celui a la Cote Mautailie*.¹¹¹

This badly fitting coat is always associated with its tragic origins; conversely, *Curial* refers to it jokingly. In an episode that imitates another from *Tirant lo Blanc* (an essential book in the creation of *Curial* that keeps appearing in episodes and details), Güelfa hands *Curial* a shirt to wear over his armour, as Carmesina does with *Tirant*. There is an important difference, however: the embroidery done by Güelfa and the abbess, *axí per los pits com per les espatles de alt a baix, creus de sant Jordi, e semblantment per les mànagues*. Melchior de Pando takes it to the young knight, who is going to confront Boca de Far: *E tantost s'armà e assajà's l'alcandora, e, obrint-la en certes parts, feren tant que li vengué bé, jatsia que en los pits ne en les espatles no li cobria sinó fort poch, de què ell no curava gens*.¹¹²

108. "what nor Galeàs, nor Tristan, nor Lancelot, nor Galvany, nor Bors, nor Palamides, nor Percival the Gallic, not the Knight with the badly-fitting coat". Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...*: I, 216.

109. "arrived at the port of Davre, where he saw the head of Galvany, who he died there and also the badly cut coat and that defined the knight who wore it". Perellós, Ramon de. "Viatge del vescomte Ramon de Perellós i de Roda fet al Purgatori nomenat de Sant Patrici", *Novel·les amoroses i morals*, ed. Arseni Pacheco, August Bover i Font. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1982: 52.

110. "Keu coined his nickname after the knight arrived in Arthur's court covered with the tunic, all tattered, that his father had been wearing when he was murdered, swearing not to take it off until he had avenged his death". Alvar, Carlos. *El rey Arturo y su mundo. Diccionario de mitología artúrica*. Madrid: Alianza Tres, 1991: 65.

111. "It was said that when Lancelot went away, the maiden who was with him by order of Sir Tristan, according I explained, followed him immediately to the Badly-cut coat". *Le roman de Tristan en prose*, ed. Philippe Ménard. Genoa: Droz, 1987: I, 63.

112. "thus on the chest and the back from the top to the bottom, crosses of Saint George, and similarly on the sleeves"; "And when he armed and put the shirt, this was open by different sides till he wore well,



The effect it thus achieves is hilarious: *Per què, muntant a cavall, en cavalls molt forts e valerosos, començaren a anar sots un estandart blanch ab creu vermella e tals paraments; mas tothom reya de la cota d'armes de Curial, veent que era camisa de dona.*¹¹³ And when Curial realizes the general merriment, he says: *Ara pusch yo ésser apellat lo donzell de la cota mal tallada.*¹¹⁴

Humour is a constant feature of *Curial*; in this case, the nickname of an Arthurian knight is parodied in the same way as Cervantes made fun of all things related to errant knights in *Quijote*. His parody again reveals the writer of the historical novel, the admirer of Cervantes' irony and... of Walter Scott.

In addition to the aforementioned books, we also find other sources in *Curial's* text, from the rare Latin writer Fulgentius to the famous *Verses on the death of Don Rodrigo Manrique, his Father* by Jorge Manrique. All these texts are mixed in a process of rewriting, as Lola Badia and Jaume Torró note in their critical edition, in which they compare *Curial's* prose with *Tirant's*: *l'Anònim reescríu de dalt a baix els estímuls literaris presos de les fonts [...] en comptes de reproduir parcialment mots, frases i motius en una xarxa intertextual no mancada de 'incongruències, como fa Martorell.*¹¹⁵ If the 'anonymous' writer can do so, it is because he is not a 15th century author, but a 19th century writer of a historical, Gothic novel.

9. From Fulgentius' *Mythologies* to Alfonso de la Torre's *Visión deleitable*, with elements of Enrique de Villena's *Glosas* and Jorge Manrique's *Verses*

In *Curial*, three of the four horses of the Sun are named after the names Fulgentius gave them in book I of his *Mythologies*: Erythraeus, Actaeon, Lampus, and Philogeus:

*Huic quoque quadrigam scribunt illam ob causam, quod aut quadripertitis temporum uarietatibus anni circulum peragat aut quod quadrifido limite diei metiatur spatium; unde et ipsis equis condigna huic nomina posuerunt, id est Erytreus, Acteon, Lampus et Filogeus. Erytreus Grece rubeus dicitur quod a matutino prosiliens limine rubicundus exurgat, Acteon splendens dicitur quod tertiae horae metis uehemens insitens lucidior fulgeat, Lampus uero ardens dum ad umbilicum diei centratum conscenderit circulum, Filogeus Grece terram amans dicitur quod horae nonae procliuior uergens occasibus pronus incumbat.*¹¹⁶

although in front and in the shoulders the dress lacked, which did not worry to him". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 168.

113. "So, on horseback, on very strong and courageous horses, they began to go under a white standard with a red cross and such kind of decorations; moreover everyone laughed at Curial's coat of arms, seeing that it was a woman's blouse". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 174.

114. "So now I could be called the maiden of the badly-cut coat". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 176.

115. "Anonymous completely rewrites the literary stimuli taken from the sources [...] instead of partially reproducing words, phrases and motifs in an intertextual network not lacking in incongruences, as Martorell does". Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. "Introducció...": 105.

116. "And if a chariot is also assigned, it's either because it accomplishes its annual revolution sharing the four distinct seasons, because it divides the course of the day into four quarters. This is also his horses



This is how they appear in *Curial*: ... *e lo sol ab lo seu carro de quatre rodes tirat per aquells quatre cavalls, ço és, Titan, Etheus, Lampaus e Philogeus, venir fort yvarçosament*.¹¹⁷ Later on, we find the division according to their function, again as in Fulgentius' book:

Com lo dia ja declinàs, e lo sol, menaçat per les tenebres qui ja s'aparellaven de venir, cuytàs los seus cavalls, dels quals lexats cansats los tres, ço és, Titan, Etheus e Lampaus, tirat solamente per Philogeus, deseparades més de les tres parts del dia, ab major velocitat que dir no-s pot, fugís vers lo regne d'Espèria.¹¹⁸

The difference with Fulgentius is in the name Titan, which sometimes designates the Sun, as Ovid does at the beginning of his *Metamorphoses*: *Nullus adhuc mundo praebebat lumina*.¹¹⁹ Even more significant is the coincidence of the name Philogeus, one more example of the parodic tone of *Curial*: instead of having the four houses separately related to a part of the day, a quadriga is being pulled by only one horse while the others, tired, refuse to work.

This coincidence is not the only passage that indicates a reading of Fulgentius, cited in *Curial* at the beginning of the third book, *E quant al integument d'aquesta faula, diu Fulgenci que nou Muses són dites nou consonàncies de la veu humana, e les nou Pièrides nou dissonàncies*,¹²⁰ which is not exact, as Fulgentius, in the prologue of his work, identifies the Pierides with the Muses, calling himself a "rude disciple of the Pierides" (*Fulgenti, rudis accola Pieridum*) and addressing the prologue to Calliope.

themselves were given names corresponding to these stages, namely Erythraeus, Actaeon, Lampus, and Philogeus. Erythraeus in Greek means red, because he gets up every red gushing in the morning line; Actaeon means shining, because at the end of the third hour, full of intensity it radiates a brighter light; about Lampus, the flamboyant, when its curve reaches the midpoint of the day; Philogeus, in Greek, means loving the land, because at the ninth hour, inclining in a more pronounced way, it comes down to lie". The editors point out that the name: *Philogée n'apparaît nulle part ailleurs* ("Philogeus has never been any where"). *Fulgence. Mythologies*, trans. and ed. Étienne Wolff, Philippe Dain. Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2013: 64-65. The French version given by these editors: *Et si on lui attribue également un quadriga, c'est soit parce qu'il accomplit sa révolution annuelle en la partageant en quatre saisons distinctes, soit parce qu'il divise le parcours de la journée en quatre quartiers. C'est aussi pourquoi on a donné à ses chevaux eux-mêmes des noms correspondant à ces étapes, à savoir Érytraeus, Actéon, Lampus et Philogée. Érytraeus, en grec, veut dire rouge, parce qu'il se lève tout rouge en jaillissant sur le seuil du matin; Actéon veut dire resplendissant, parce qu'au terme de la troisième heure, plein d'intensité il rayonne d'une lumière plus éclatante; quant à Lampus, c'est le flamboyant, lorsque dans sa courbe il est parvenu au point médian de la journée; Philogée, en grec, veut dire qui aime la terre, parce que, à la neuvième heure, s'inclinant d'une manière plus prononcée, il descend pur se coucher*.

117. "and alone with his four-wheeled cart pulled by these four horses, these being, Titan, Erythraeus, Lampus and Philogeus, he could come very fast". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 80-81.

118. "As the day already fades, and the sun threatened by the darkness that already paired to come, he looked after the horses, of which the three steeds tired, that is, Titan, Etheus and Lampaus, being pulled alone by Philogeus, helpless more than three parts of the day, as fast as possible, fleeing toward the kingdom of Esperia". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 249-250.

119. Ovid. *Metamorphoses*, in *fifteen books*, ed. John Minellius. Dublin: P. Wogan, 1815: 2.

120. "As for the integument of this fable, Fulgentius says nine Muses are these resonances of the human voice, and nine Pierides, nine dissonances". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 6.



But the text of *Curial* takes a loan from Fulgentius' *Fabula de nomen Musis*. The Latin author adds Apollo to the nine Muses, as ten is the number of elements in the human voice: *Huic etiam Apollini nouem deputant Musas ipsumque decimum Musis adiciunt illa uidelicet causa, quod humanae uocis decem sint modulamina: unde et cum decacorda Apollo pingitur cithara. Sed et lex diuina decacordum dicit psalterium*.¹²¹ Then, he describes the voice emissions in a curious description that surely thrilled the philologist Milà, who copied it in *Curial*:

Fit ergo uox quattuor dentibus, id est e contra positis, ad quos lingua percutit et quibus si unus minus fuerit sibilum potius quam uocem reddat necesse est. Duo labia uelut cimbala uerborum commoda modulantia, lingua ut plectrum quae curuamine quodam uocalem format spiritum, palatum cuius concauitas profert sonum, gutturis fistula quae tereti meatum spiritalem praebet excursu et pulmo qui uelut aerius follis concepta reddit ac reuocat. Habes ergo nouem Musarum uel Apollinis ipsius redditam rationem.¹²²

Fa's, donques, la veu, per quatre dents contraposades, les quals la lengua fêr, de les quals si alguna defall ha defalliment en la veu; dos labis, dues cathacimbales, als quals la lengua plega, e com se encorba forma un vocal spirit en la concavitat del paladar o de la boca, qui per lo camí de gola corre com per flauta; los leus o polmons, axí con manxes, envien lo vent, e despuys que és enviat lo revoquen e cobren. E aquests nou instruments són dits nou Muses, a les quals és ajustat Appolló, pero ço com deu són les veus de tota melodia, e poch valdrien los instruments si no fos instrumentador. E açò quant al cantar.¹²³

Next, he returns to the ten-stringed harp cited by Fulgentius: *Axí mateix Appol·ló se pinta ab decacordi, que vol dir instrument ab deu cordes concordants o deu veu consonants, e finalmente cítara. E així saltiri és dit decacordi, quasi deu cordes consonants, segons és dit*.¹²⁴

121. *Fulgence. Mythologies...*: 66.

122. "The vocal expression is therefore with four teeth, those that face the tongue and against which it strikes; if it finds one less, the tongue inevitably produces a hissing sound rather than a vocal sound. The two lips are like cymbals that give a measure of the flexibility of the words; the tongue as a plectrum and its curvature rules the breath of the voice: the concave shape of the palate emits the sound; the pipe of the throat offers, by its rounded end, a passage for breathing; and the lungs, like a bellows filled with air, expire and inspire their content. That is the explanation of the nine Muses and Apollo himself". The French version by the editors: *L'expression vocale se fait donc par quatre dents, celles qui font face à la langue et contre lesquelles elle vient frapper; s'il s'en trouve une de moins, la langue produira inévitablement un sifflement plutôt qu'une sonorité vocale. Les deux lèvres sont comme des cymbales qui donnent une mesure à la souplesse des mots; la langue est comme un plectre et sa courbure règle le souffle de la voix: la forme concave du palais émet le son; le conduit qu'est la gorge offre, par son issue arrondie, un passage à la respiration; et les poumons, comme un soufflet rempli d'air, expirent et inspirent leur contenu. Voilà donc l'explication des neuf Muses et d'Apollon lui-même*. *Fulgence. Mythologies...*: 67.

123. "He reach to express the voice with the tongue throughout four opposed teeth, which, in case one of them fall, it is noticed in the voice; two lips as two kettledrum, where the tongue stops and as they curve form a vocal spirit in the concavity of the palate or the mouth, which during the way to the neck, the sound slights or strongs run like a flute, similar to bellows that puch the air, and after sending the air, the recover it. And these nine instruments are called nine Muses, which Apollo is closed, but in any case, at it is due, the voices are absolutely harmonious, and few important would has the instruments without the player. And all this fong singing". *Curial e Güelfa...*: III, 7.

124. "Apollo is likewise also painted with decachord, which means an instrument with ten concordant strings or ten consonants voices, and finally zither. And so said psaltery is called decachord, almost ten consonants strings, as is said". *Curial e Güelfa...*: III, 7.



After a citation from Psalms 92, 4 (*Vulgata* 91, 4), he returns to Fulgentius and summarises the list and explanation about the nine Muses. About the first, the text of *Curial* notes, *Item les dites Muses en altra manera són all-legorizades: que la primera Musa sí-s appellada Clio, que és interpretada gloriosa dea, o cogitació gloriosa de cercar o cogitar sciència; ‘cleos’ en grech, en latí ‘fama’, la qual segueix la sciència.*¹²⁵

Fulgentius’ text clarifies this allegory:

*Nos uero nouem Musas doctrinae atque scientiae dicimus modos, hoc est: prima Clio quasi cogitatio prima discendi –cleos enim Grece fama dicitur [...] et quoniam nullus scientiam quaerit nisi in qua famae suae protelet dignitatem, ob hanc rem prima Clio appellata est, ide est cogitatio quaerendae scientiae.*¹²⁶

So it continues with the other eight Muses and the Pierides, in the tradition of Ovid: *Tantost les dites Pièrides foren per los déus convertides en piques, que en comúen lenguatge cathalà són dites garces, e són ocells garruladors, e aprenen parlar en totes lengües ço que-ls mostren, emperò no saben ni entenen ço que dièn.*¹²⁷

He takes the word *piques* from Canto I of the *Divine Comedy*’s *Purgatorio*: *seguitando il mio canto con quel sòno / di cui le Piche misere sentiro / lo colpo tal, che disperar perdono.*¹²⁸ This *piques* (*picae* in Latin, more similar to *Pierides*) mean ‘magpie’ in Catalan. Although he has followed Fulgentius’ text, he now provides an explanation from Ovid (*Metamorphoses*, V) in which the Muses are an allegory of the degrees of knowledge.¹²⁹

A little before, Fulgentius (*Mitologiae* I, 8) had talked about the *Fabula de Fatis*, Cloto, Laquesis and Atropos:

Tria etiam ipso Plutoni destinant fata: quarum prima Cloto, secunda Lacesis, tertia Atropos –clitos enim Grece euocatio dicitur, Lacesis uero sors nuncupatur, Atropos quoque sine ordine

125. “Also, said Muses are allegorised in another way: the first Muse is called Clio, which is interpreted as glorious goddess, or glorious cogitation to seek or cogitate upon science; ‘cleos’ in Greek, in Latin, ‘fame’, which follows science”. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 8.

126. “For us, the nine Muses correspond to the degree of education and knowledge; and the first is Clio, that is the first purpose of study; indeed, cleos, in Greek, means rumor [followed by two quotation from Homer]; and, since nobody seeks knowledge that will enable them to extend the magnificence of her reputation, for this reason, the first was named Clio, that is to say the intention to pursue knowledge”. From the French version of the editors: *Por nous, les neuf Muses correspondent aux degrés de l’éducation et du savoir; ainsi la première, c’est Clio, autrement dit le premier dessein de l’étude; en effet, cleos, en grec, signifie rumeur* [followed by two quotation from Homer]; *et, puisque personne ne recherche un savoir qui ne lui permette de prolonger la magnificence de sa réputation, pour cette raison, la première fut nommée Clio, c’est-à-dire le dessein de rechercher le savoir. Fulgence. Mythologies*...: 66-67.

127. “Immediately the said Pierides were converted by the gods into piques, that in common Catalan are called ‘graces’ (magpies), and they are garrulous birds, and learn to speak in all languages they are shown, but they do not know nor understand what they are saying”. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 6.

128. “Accompanying my song with that sound / of which the magpies felt miserable / hit him so hard, that he despaired of pardon”. Alighieri, Dante. “Divina Commedia”, *Tutte le opere*, ed. Italo Borzi, Giovanni Fallani, Nicola Maggi, Silvio Zennaro. Rome: Grandi Tascabili Economici-Newton Compton, 2005: 234 (lines 10-12).

129. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 9.



*dicitur; hoc uidelicet sentire uolentes quod prima sit natiuitatis euocatio, secunda uitae sors, quemadmodum quis uiuere possit, tertia mortis conditio quae sine lege uenit.*¹³⁰

This explanation may serve to understand the Duke of Bavaria's strange choice of names in calling his daughters Cloto and Laquesis, the names of the Parcae. However, we should still add another text to see *Curial's* erudite weaving better: *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida, libros I-III*¹³¹ by Enrique de Villena,¹³² an author that Milà i Fontanals had read with care:

*Dixeron los poethas que tres fadas eran que fadavan todos los omes en sus nascimientos, a las cuales llamaron Clotho, Lachesis e Antropos; e que Clotho trae la rueca e Lachesis tirava el filo e ordía la tela e Antropos la cortava. Llamáronles Parcas, es a saber perdonaderas, por contrario, porque a alguno non perdonavan, ansí como al vinagre dizen vino dulce; e quiriendo por estas entender los tres tiempos, pasado, presente e porvenir, que traen la serie de las causas, que son los fados de los omes, segúnd ya se declaró en una otra glosa ante d'esta. E bien dan a entender sus nombres esto que d'ellas es dicho, porque Clotho en griego quiere dezir "vocaçión", mostrando la entrada de la vida. E Lachesis en griego quiere dezir "suerte", que es la suerte de la vida, siquiere la duraçión de aquélla. Antropos en griego quiere dezir "sin orden", por la condiçión de la muerte, que non viene a çierto tiempo.*¹³³

130. "It also affects the same Pluto three Destinies: the first is Clotho, Lachesis the second and third Atropos -in fact, clitos, in Greek, means call, Lachesis means fate and Atropos mean no rules; by this we obviously want to make it understood that the first is the call to be born, the second the fate of life, how everyone can live, the third, the reality of death that comes without being bound by any law". From the French version of the editors: *On affecte également au même Pluton les trois Destinées: la première est Clotho, la deuxième Lachésis et la troisième Atropos –en effet, clitos, en grec, veut dire appel, Lachésis désigne le sort et Atropos veut dire sans règle; par là on veut évidemment faire comprendre que la première est l'appel à naître, la deuxième le sort de la vie, la manière dont chacun peut vivre, la troisième la réalité de la mort qui arrive sans être tenue par aucune loi. Mythologies...*: 62-63.

131. Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida, libros I-III. Obras completas, II*, ed. Pedro Cátedra. Madrid: Biblioteca Castro, 1994: 73.

132. Lola Badia and Jaume Torró note *dos errors conjuntius* ("two conjunctive mistakes") in Villena's *Glosas* and in *Curial* (goddess Obsrea or Opstrea and Dido's lineage refered by Camar); they underscore that *és rellevant haver pogut demostrar que l'Anònim usava unes gloses de l'Eneida que comparteixen alguns errors textuats amb les que Villena va fer servir en el seu comentari castellà* ("it is rellevant to have demonstrated that the Anonymous used the glosses from the Eneida, which shared textual mistakes with the ones used by Villena in their Castilian coment"), and attribute the fact to his education in *l'ambient cultural de les corts dels Trastàmara de les primeres dècades del segle XV* ("the cultural atmosphere into the Royal Courts of Trastamara Dynasty during the first decades of the 15th century"). Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. "Introducció...": 84-85. Contrary to what the scholars oppinion, it is not a common source what links the two works, but the reading of Villena's *Glosas* by Milà i Fontanals. The numerous medieval sources from different literatures that appear in *Curial* only make sense from the perspective of the scholar's vast erudition.

133. "The poets said that the three fairies wre infront all the men at their birth, who they called Clotho, Lachesis and Antropos; and that Clotho brought the spinning wheel and Lachesis spun the thread and wove the cloth and Antropos cut it. They was called Parcas, that is, those who forgive; but, in contrast, they did not forget someone, such as they said sweet wine to the vinegar, and whishing to understand the three times (past, present and future) that organized the causes and fate of the man, according it is said above in another glosse. Their names allow understand what is said about them, because in Greek Clotho means 'vocation', showing the entrance of the live. And Lachesis in Greek means 'luck', which is the luck of life, according its duration. Antropos in Greek means 'without order', for the condition



Later on, in the gloss of book II, referring to Pryam's death, he insists:

*...que fue por terminación de los fados, es a saber por acarreo de las costillaciones celestiales, que causan aquellas tres partes del tiempo, es a saber prinçipiante, mediante e finiente, a quien dixeron los poetas fadas, que fadavan los ombres, nombradas por ellos Clotho, Lachesis e Antropos.*¹³⁴

In *Curial*, Antropos does not take the usual spelling, 'Atropos'; this is Melchior de Pando talking to the hero: *Curial, aquesta doncella pot haver nom Laquesis, mas ella és Àntropos, certament, e axí ho provarets per temps.*¹³⁵ And Fortune, talking to Güelfa in her dreams: *e sinó tement que Àntropos lo'm tragués d'entre mans.*¹³⁶ In the same sense, we should understand Curial's expression when talking to Calliope: *O, egrègia senyora! ¿E quals fades me fadaren que yo tanta honor reebés, que nou germanes, filles del major del déus mortals, vengessen a mi e visitassen aquest sepulcre de ignorància?*¹³⁷ Or the presence of Venus' mother, Dionio,¹³⁸ 'Dione' in *Curial*;¹³⁹ that of the leedores so present in his glosses of Virgil —*legidor* in *Curial*—¹⁴⁰ or the repeated reference to *Troyana historia* by Guido de Columnis, *Historia Fiorita* by Armannino, the celebrated Dictis and Dares, even the surprising *guay!* from *Curial*: *¡Guay de mí, que yo acá no venia per consell!*;¹⁴¹ *¡E, guay, que non es de fiar en los dioses cuando son forçados!*¹⁴² Also surprising is the *desusada mà* that Curial *alargà al plat* to eat¹⁴³ which Villena uses in his letter to the king of Navarre, to whom he offers his work: *por cuya contemplación e mandado se atrevió mi desusada mano tractar la péñola escriviente la virgiliana doctrina en la Eneida contenida.*¹⁴⁴

After spending seven years imprisoned in Africa, being now rich after obtaining the treasure of Camar's father and regaining his ladyship's favour, Curial leaves for a time of dissolution in France: *se donà a viure mollament e laciva, como si fos arquebisbe*

of death, which arrive in a unsuspected time". Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida, libros I-III*...: 73.

134. "which was termination of the fates, that is by combination of celestial constellations, causing those three parts of time, namely beginning, middle and finishing, that the poet fadas said, who fate give the shadows named by them Clotho, Lachesis and Antropos". Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida*...: 486.

135. "Curial, this maiden could be named Laquesis, although she is Àntropos, certainly, and it can be tested for long times". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 109.

136. "and if not fearing that Àntropos removed it from my hands". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 223.

137. "Oh, distinguished Madam! And what fairs will enchanter to me, in order I can receive so big honour? That nine sisters, daughters of the greatest of the mortal gods, came to me and visited this sepulchre of ignorance?". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 78.

138. Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida*...: 614.

139. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 58 and following.

140. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 247.

141. "Be careful of me, because I did not go here for advice!". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 70.

142. "Be careful, that we cannot trust in the gods when they are forced!". Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida*...: 414.

143. "barely used hand"; "he approximated the plate". *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 99.

144. "for whose contemplation and order, my vacant hand dared works on the writing pen of the Virgilian doctrine contained in the Aeneid". Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida*...: 5.



*o gran prelat, no recordant-se ésser cavaller ne home de sciència*¹⁴⁵ (we can perceive the author's delight in this satirical reference to the Church's authorities). Indulging in vices (greed, lust), it is not surprising that one night, Bacchus (not precisely a *déu de sciència* —“God of science”— as the narrator concedes) appears in his dreams; but he will also have a *visión deleitable* (“delightful vision”) of the seven liberal arts as drawn in Alfonso de la Torre's work.

As this author notes, *la lumbré intellectual, la qual es llamada visión*¹⁴⁶ next to this god, Curial sees the seven queens; in *Visión deleitable* these are seven maidens. The first one holds in her right hand a *título escripto de letras latinas, las quales dezían en esta manera*: ‘*Vox litterata et articulata debito modo pronunciata*’. *E en la siniestra mano tenía una palmatoria con açotes*. A *muy gracioso* (“very cute”) little kid gets close to her *como que veniese fuyendo al abrigo de su madre e se acogió a la donzella*. *El qual niño avía nombre entendimiento*¹⁴⁷; she tells him:

El mi ofiçio es tratar de la disçiplina et artefijio de las letras; conviene a saber de las letras latinas et de las partes de la oraçión, de las sílabas, de los pies, de los açentos, de la ortographía, de la ethimología, de la diasintástica, del barbarismo, del soliçismo et de los otros viçios del metaplasmo, del tema, del tiempo, de la fábula, de la prosa, de la ystoria.¹⁴⁸

In *Curial*, the vision of the seven arts is much shorter, less allegorical and characterised by the irony that permeates the whole story. As an example, let us see how the first queen, Grammar, appears surrounded by little children (and not, as in Alfonso de la Torre, talking to the nice little children of Knowledge):

Estaven davant aquell déu, a la part emperò esquerra, una reyna, ab aquella cara jove e fadrina e una corona al cap no molt preciosa, circuyda de infinits minyons, qui uns legien, altres ploraven; e tenia la dita reyna en la man dreta unes correjades, e en la squerra un cantell de pa. Stàvan davant aquesta quatre donzelles molt belles, les quals los seus noms propis tenien brodats als pits, e per aquelles letres Curial sabé lo nom de cada una d'elles, ço és: Ortografia, Ethimologia, Diassintástica e Prosídia.¹⁴⁹

145. “they gave smoothly and lascivious living, as if he was a great prelate archbishop or not remembering he was a knight or science's man”. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 173.

146. “the intellectual fire, which is called vision”. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*. Toulouse: Juan Parix and Esteban Clebat, 1489; f. 6v (facsimile, Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1983). The work was published in a Catalan translation in 1484 and in Spanish in 1485.

147. “title written in Latin letters, which said in this way: *Vox litterata et articulata debito modo pronunciata*. And in the left hand, it was done evident scourges”; “like he ran away looking for being harbouring by his mother, and he took the protection of the maiden. And this boy had the name of Knowledge”. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: ff. 4-5v.

148. “My trade is to try to discipline and artifice of letters; to know the Latin letters and the parts of speech, syllables, feet, accents, the spelling, the etymology, the syntax, barbarism, the solecism and other vices of the metaplasma, the theme, time, fable, prose, the history”. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: ff. 4-5v.

149. “They stood before that God, on the left however, a queen, and with that face of a young maiden and a not very beautiful crown on her head, surrounded by countless boys, who some read, others wept; and the queen said had belts in her right hand, and on the left, a piece of bread. Before her, four very beautiful maidens, with their names were embroidered on their own breasts, and for whose letters Curial



This *cantell de pa* (“a bit of bread”) that she is holding takes us to another text, *Libre de Fortuna e Prudència* by Bernat Metge, in which the old man tricks her into getting on the ship *en l’una ma tench un anap / en l’altra un cantelh de pa*.¹⁵⁰ Children who read are thus rewarded, and those who cry suffer *correjades* (“blows with a belt”).

The next queen in *Visión* —*la señora de aquella tierra*— is Logic: *en la mano derecha tenía un manipulo de flores et un título en letras griegas que dezían verum et falsum. En la siniestra tenía un muy ponçoso escurpión*.¹⁵¹ In Curial’s vision, the queen *no podia estar segura; e tenía dues serps, ó és, una en cascuna mà, les quals contínuament se volien mordre*; in front of her there were three maidens with their names embroidered in their bosoms: ‘Probabilis, Demonstrativa e Sophística’.¹⁵² In *Visión deleitable*, Logic teaches Knowledge to argue by means of syllogisms.

The third queen in *Visión*, Rhetoric, is a source of more coincidences:

Era infinitamente muy más aparente así en el gesto de la cara e façiones et proporciones de la propia persona como en el sumpto ert preçio de las vestiduras a primera faz [...]. A las vezes fazia un gesto en tanto exçeso de alegría [...]. En la mano diestra tenía un añafil. En la siniestra tenía un libro cerrado.¹⁵³

Painted around the room, Knowledge sees *los tres géneros de las causas: deliberativo, demostrativo, judicial*.¹⁵⁴

The third queen in Curial’s vision is dressed *de vâries colors vestida, emperò molt ricamente avillada; e estava tan alegre cantant, que açò era una gran maravella*.¹⁵⁵ Her three maidens were called ‘Judicialis, Demonstrativa, Deliberativa’.¹⁵⁶

The fourth queen *tenía una taula blanca davant si*, and the maidens attending had the names ‘Par, Dispar’. Without *Visión deleitable* as a guide, it is not easy to interpret this fourth figure, *Arisméthica*, who *en la mano diestra tenía un grifio de fierro; en la siniestra una tabla emblanquida. E en somo de las vestiduras tenía unas letras griegas, en*

knew the name of each one, that is: Spelling, Ethimology, and Disyntactic and Prosody”. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 174.

150. “in one hand tench a glass / in the other a bit of bread”. Metge, Bernat. *Obras*, ed. Martí de Riquer. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 1959: 28.

151. “in her right hand she had a bunch of flowers and a title in Greek letters they that said verum et falsum. In the left, she had a very poisonous scorpion”. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: ff. 7v-8.

152. “could not be sure; and had two snakes, or one in each hand, who continually wanted to bite”. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 175.

153. “It was thus infinitely more apparent gesture face and factions and proportions propria persona as in the question and cost of the garments to first face [...]. Sometimes, she expressed an excess of happiness [...]. In her right hand she had an anaphil. In her left, she had a closed book”. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: ff. 11-12.

154. “the three kinds of causes: deliberative, demonstrative, judicial”. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: f. 13.

155. “dressed in various colors, however very richly dressed; and was so happy singing that this was a great marvel”. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 175.

156. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 175.



*las quales decía: Par e impar.*¹⁵⁷ The Toulouse edition that I consulted includes the inscription *Par e impar*.

The next maiden is Geometry; while in *Visión deleitable* each maiden is one step closer to the peak of a mountain, in Curial's vision the queens are getting closer to the god Bacchus. In *Visión deleitable*, *en la mano derecha tenía un cordel delgado con una pieça del plomo; en la siniestra un compás muy concertado*, and the maidens tell to Knowledge that *el antiquíssimo Tales avía fallado el artificio de medir en lo alto e llano e profundo*.¹⁵⁸ In Curial's vision, the queen *tenia un livell en la una mà, e en l'altra un compàs*, and her three maidens were called 'Altimetria, Planimetria, Subeumetria'.¹⁵⁹

The next queen in *Curial* is Music, although her name is not mentioned and we have to deduce it (in contrast to *Visión deleitable*, where the allegories are personified with illustrations). About her, the narrator tells us: *Sonava uns òrguens e cantava ab tanta dolçor de melodia*, which corresponds to the passage from Alfonso de la Torre that reads, *E la géllica donzella tenía en la mano una viuela et en la otra mano unos órganos manuales*, in which Knowledge is painted over the walls, *las tres partes de la música; conviene a saber: la armónica, la orgánica, la métrica*,¹⁶⁰ three aspects that in *Curial* correspond to the three accompanying maidens: *Organico flatu, Armonica voce, Ritmica pulsu*, accurate names that reveal an author (as was the case with Milà) who knew about music.

The seventh and last queen, the closest to Bacchus, *tenia una spera en la mà e un quadrant als pits*.¹⁶¹ As stated in *Visión deleitable*, she is Astrology, who sits on top of the mountain and can open the door of the room where Truth resides. What in *Curial* reads, *havia la vista tan àgil que penetrava e traspasava los cels*, corresponds, in *Visión*, with *que ella avía visto en su agudeza de ojos*. And her *oficio era considerar la altura et el movimiento et la cantidad de los çielos et estrellas*,¹⁶² but the explanation in this book is shorter because there is room for the speeches of Truth and other virtues. In *Curial*, this passage is similar and it closes with two maidens called *Motus* and *Effectus*.

The enumerations end with the characters sitting at the feet of the first queen: *Priscian, Uguici, Pàpias, Catholicon, Ysidoro, Alexandre e molts altres*; *Prisciano, Alixandre de Viladei*—thus clarifying the possible confusion created by the name Alexandre—

157. "she had a white table in front of her"; "in her right hand she had an iron glyph; in her left, a whitened table. And in the clothes she had some Greek letters, which said: Odd and even". Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: f. 14.

158. "in her right hand, she had a thin cord with a piece of the lead; in the left a compass very good worked"; "the very old Tales had defined the artifice for measuring in height, flat and depth". Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: f. 15v.

159. "had a ruler in one hand, and in the other a compass". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 176.

160. "some organs were playing and singing with such sweetness of melody"; "and the thin maiden had in her hand a vihuela and in the other hand some manual organs"; "the three parts of the music; it is important to know: the harmonic, the organic, the metric". Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: ff. 16-16v.

161. "had a sphere in her hand and a quadrant on her breast". *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 176.

162. "had such sharp eyesight that it penetrated and went through the skies"; "that she had seen in her sharpness of eyes"; "trade was to consider the height and the movement and the quantity of the skies and stars". Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: ff. 17-17v.



and before them, Oguicio, also appear in *Visión deleitable* as ‘inventors’ of the different sciences. Just before listing them, and in a new display of irony, the narrator of *Curial* says: *Detràs d’aquell déu havia tanta gent e de tan diverses partides e de tan stranyes terres, que si no fos que tots parlaven llatí, nulls temps se fóran entesos*.¹⁶³ Such a commentary, which does not make sense in an allegorical vision, is understandable in a realistic narration, as in *Relaciones de la vida de Marcos de Obregón*, which also occurs in the city of Milan, and in which we find people using Latin as a lingua franca: *Hallamos allí que habían pasado en otro barco algunas gentes de diversas naciones: franceses, alemanes, italianos y españoles. Y para entendernos, hablamos todos en latín*.¹⁶⁴

In addition to these different readings, which left their traces in *Curial*, we should note Jorge Manrique’s *Verses on the death of Don Rodrigo Manrique, his Father* (thus from after November 1476); Sanglier, who was once ordained as a Franciscan, reminds us in verse XVI, the one referring to the Princes of Aragon, in his sermon to *Curial*:

*E prech-te que-m digues: ¿què és ço que-t ha sobrat de la multitut de viandes precioses que has menjades, de les dances, de les juntes e dels torneigs que has fets? ¿On són les festes en les quals te est trobat? Mostra-les-me, frare meu. ¿On és lo dia de ir? Mostra’l-me. ¿On és la glòria dels preciosos ornaments? ¿No sabs totes les coses haver fi?*¹⁶⁵

The citation is from the verse that opens with, *¿Qué se hizo el rey don Juan? / Los infantes de Aragón, / ¿qué se hicieron? / ¿Qué fue de tanto galán? / ¿Qué fue de tanta invención / como trajieron?* and continues with *Las justas y los torneos, / paramentos, bordaduras / y cimbras / ¿fueron sino devaneos?*¹⁶⁶ A bit later, Achilles is referred in the same way as Manrique famously described his father *don Rodrigo: Amigo de sus amigos [...] / ¡Qué enemigo de enemigos!*¹⁶⁷—although *amico amicus* belongs to a earlier tradition noted by

163. “Hugucio, Papias, Catholicon, Isidore, Alexandre and many others”; “Behind that God there were so many people and so many games and so strange lands, which if not all speak Latin, they would at no time be understood”. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 177.

164. “We found that on another boat there had been some people from different nations: French, German, Italian and Spanish. And to understand each other, we all speak Latin”. Espinel, Vicente. *Relaciones de la vida del escudero Marcos de Obregón. Novela picaresca*, ed. Rosa Navarro. Madrid: Biblioteca Castro, 2008: IV, 249.

165. “And pray tell me: what is that which is left over from the multitude of exquisite delicacies that you have eaten, of the dances, of the jousts and the tournaments you have done? Where are the parties you have found yourself in? Show them to me, my good friar. Where is the day of yesterday? Show it to me. Where is the glory of the precious ornaments? Don’t you know everything has an end?”. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 39.

166. “What came of King John? / Princes of Aragon, / what came of them? / What of so many squires? / What of such much invention / what did they bring?”; “The just and the tournaments, / facings, embroideries / and crests / were but dalliances?”. Manrique, Jorge. *Poesía*, ed. Vicente Beltrán. Barcelona: Crítica, 1993: 158-159 (lines 181-186).

167. “Friend of his friends [...] / What an enemy of enemies!”. Manrique, Jorge. *Poesía*...: 118 (lines 301, 304).



Erasmus in his *Adagia*.¹⁶⁸ In *Curial*, the Greek hero is referred to as *amich de son amich e enemich de son enemich*,¹⁶⁹ while dancing (*les dances*) appears in the next verse, *¿Qué se hizo aquel danzar*.¹⁷⁰ Similarly, a reference to the yesterday having passed —*on és lo dia de ir?* (“where is the day of yesterday?”)— comes from the previous verse: *vengamos a lo de ayer, / que tan bien es olvidado / como aquello*.¹⁷¹ The reference to food in this context of *Curial* should be counted as yet another irony, as it is obvious that food is ephemeral and thus cannot be related to the motive of *ubi sunt*.

10. Conclusions

Curial e Güelfa is not a chivalric novel written in the 15th century. This is manifested both in the irony that the reader keeps gleefully to find at every step as well as in the novel structure. Book three opens with an acknowledgement: *lo qual és algun poquet pus intricat que ls altres primers*;¹⁷² the narrator thus shows knowledge of the whole work as well as its effects on the reader. However, a third element perfectly portrays the author of the work: the fact that he is an erudite scholar who has read vastly, from Muntaner’s *Crònica* to the *Novellino*, from *Paris e Viana* to *Petit Jehan de Saintré*, somebody who knows the troubadours, Rigaut de Berbezilh (whose song he credits) and Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, who has read Fungentius’ *Mitologiae*, *Glosas de la Eneida* by Enrique de Villena, *Visión deleitable* by Alfonso de la Torre, Manrique’s *Verses* and Luis Milán’s *El cortesano*. Concordance with these —and other— works reveal that *Curial e Güelfa* is a composite imitation created by an author... from the 19th century who has read the most outstanding works of Romance literatures (he also imitates Dante, Petrarch or Boccaccio, as the work of other scholars has shown).¹⁷³

The literal citations from these works, the nods to very diverse literary creations (from Spanish works of the Golden Era to Gothic novels by Walter Scott), undoubtedly indicate that the author of *Curial e Güelfa* was its discoverer: Manuel Milà i Fontanals. Therefore, this erudite creation is, as he said, a *mélange de gothique et de renaissance* (“a mixing of Gothic and Renaissance”): a Gothic novel in its time (none of the 15th century novels were ever called ‘Gothic’) and a great work by an author of the Catalan *Renaixença*. Only an erudite scholar like Milà could have written a novel with such a wide display of readings, the outcome of a hyper-elaborated composite imitation. A Napoleonic general who besieged Barcelona with the Fifth Division of the Hundred Thousand Sons of Saint Louis might have inspired

168. Erasmus. *Adages Ili to Iv100*, ed. and trad. Margaret Mann Phillips. Toronto-Buffalo-London: University of Toronto Press, 1982: 250 (I, iii, 17) (*Collected Works of Erasmus*: 31)

169. “Friend of his friend and enemy of his enemy”. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 83-84.

170. “What did that dancer do?”. Manrique, Jorge. *Poesía*...: 112 (line 202).

171. “we come from that of yesterday, / which is well forgotten tan / like that”. Manrique, Jorge. *Poesía*...: 175 (lines 178-180).

172. “which is a bit most complex than the first one”. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 13.

173. Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. “Introducció...”: 59-98.



the name of the main character, Curial (“courtier”), a name that, in addition, fitted the work well, in a nod to another original work from the Renaissance that mixed languages and genres, *El cortesano*, written by a Valencian author with the same surname, Luis Milán.

No 15th-century writer could have access to all the medieval texts that appear in it and whose presence I have shown in my analysis, because only the printing press enabled the spread and thus, the reading, of Italian, Provencal, French, Castilian and Catalan works written in the Middle Ages. Undoubtedly, the presence of works from later than the date assigned to the story in the text of the *Curial* mean it is impossible to continue to claim that this work was written in the 15th century. *Curial e Güelfa* is the creation of a great scholar, the finest 19th-century peninsular Romanist: Manuel Milà i Fontanals.



MEDIEVALISM IN CONTEMPORARY FANTASY: A NEW SPECIES OF ROMANCE

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary fantasists are often inspired by the texts from and with medieval context. This paper taps into Horace Walpole's principles revealed in the preface to *The Castle of Otranto* to show that the works of medieval fantasy and contemporary fantasy subgenres written in 20th and 21st centuries have a lot in common with Walpole's recipe for creating 'a new species of romance'. When considered from the present time, the Medieval period can be seen as being halfway between fantasy and reality, in a blurry area where the two overlap, and contemporary fantasists use this trait to build their fictional worlds as effective reverberators of universal themes that remain interesting, appealing and worth repeating.

KEYWORDS

Fantasy, Medievalism, Reality, Contemporary fiction.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Phantasia, Mediaevalismus, Realitas, Fictio contemporalis.

A story with medieval or medieval-like settings, locales and societies is a feature frequently encountered in epic fantasy and its sibling subgenres. However, the common ground on which the old meets the new in this kind of fantasy stretches beyond the decorative and superficial use of castles, feudal system, knighthood, chivalry, armours, weapons and other easily noticeable elements of medievalism. Contemporary fantasies incorporating elements of medievalism have a lot in common with the time in which their authors live.

Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* was written as an attempt to bring together medieval and modern traditions. In addition to becoming immensely successful, so much that by the 1790s the novel came to be regarded as the originator of a new genre, it also provoked and annoyed a lot of Walpole's learned contemporaries with the word 'Gothic' added to the subtitle in its second edition thus indicating overt kinship with medieval romances and the Dark Ages. As pointed out by Clery they objected to the experiment by asking —how could a Gothic story be written by a contemporary author?¹

Should such a question be applied to contemporary writers of fantasy one could also wonder —how can a twenty or twenty-first century author write a story set in the medieval or medieval-like environment, and to what end? A sporadic occurrence of such a literary intervention would be deemed as curious. However, its extensive employment by contemporary fantasists has greatly contributed to the popularization of the sub-genres of fantasy now commonly known by a number of names that represent overlapping market categories: epic fantasy, heroic fantasy, medieval fantasy, or sword and sorcery, to name a few.

The terms used to refer to such a variety of sub-genres are applied quite interchangeably and arbitrarily by critics, general fandom and particularly by publishers. 'Epic fantasy', for example, is used "to describe Heroic Fantasies that extend over several volumes" so any attempt to rigorously distinguish one sub-genre from another has "lost its usefulness".² As is often the case, there is a tendency to group them under one commoner and easier to memorize term, so many such works "now have merely the word Fantasy on the cover, or no descriptive word at all".³ Obviously, quite a number of similarities among them serve to justify their treatment as a single lot, and one of these similarities in particular —the fact that many of them heavily rely on medieval-like settings, locales and societies— not only places them under the umbrella of the fantasy genre or, should one attempt to distinguish the nuances among them, into a variety of its sub-genres, but it also represents a curious feature only seemingly directly opposed to the 'modern' tradition, to use the term in the similar context and with similar intention as Walpole did, which brings us to the question posed in the previous paragraph.

1. Clery, Emma J. "The Genesis of 'Gothic' Fiction", *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, Jerrold E. Hogle, ed. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2002: 21.

2. Clute, John; Grant, John, eds. *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. London: Orbit Books, 1997: 319.

3. Clute, John; Nicholls, Peter, eds. *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*. London: Orbit Books, 1999: 562.



The origins of epic fantasy and its sibling sub-genres can be traced far back into the past. In addition to numerous myths, such as the stories about Prometheus or Gilgamesh, its examples, among others, include medieval and renaissance texts such as *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Spenser's *The Fairie Queene* and other examples from a rich tradition of Arthurian texts. There is a link between these and other representatives of epic tradition regarded as the 'taproot texts'.⁴ To explain this link and thus answer why fantastic worlds created by contemporary authors are not uncommonly inspired by the taproot texts from and with medieval context, so different from the age they live and work in, one can try using as an example Horace Walpole's principles revealed in the preface to the second edition of *The Castle of Otranto* "to explain the grounds on which he composed it",⁵ thus defining a new mode of writing created by employing Gothic architectural style and, what is more important, a distinguished aura of medievalism.

It was an attempt to blend the two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern. In the former, all was imagination and improbability: in the latter, nature is always intended to be, and sometimes has been, copied with success. Invention has not been wanting; but the great resources of fancy have been dammed up, by a strict adherence to common life. But if, in the latter species, Nature has cramped imagination, she did but take her revenge, having been totally excluded from old romances. The actions, sentiments, and conversations, of the heroes and heroines of ancient days, were as unnatural as the machines employed to put them in motion. The author of the following pages thought it possible to reconcile the two kinds.⁶

The preface to the first edition of *The Castle of Otranto* presents this work of fiction as a genuine medieval romance, whereas the second edition reissued in 1765 defines it as *A Gothic Story*. The word 'Gothic' in its subtitle sets the story in the medieval era qualifying it thus as 'ancient', which Walpole related to 'imagination and improbability', a phrase one can easily apply to any piece of literature written as fantasy. In Walpole's *Otranto* there is an 'ominous casque' augmented to fantastic proportions so that it is "an hundred times more large than any casque ever made for human being", then the portrait that "uttered a deep sigh, and heaved its breast" and "began to move", "three drops of blood" that "fell from the nose of Alfonso's statue", and the spectre that "discovered to Frederic the fleshless jaws and empty sockets of a skeleton, wrapt in a hermit's cowl".⁷ Such fantastic occurrences are opposed to 'nature', 'rules of probability' and 'common life' or, in other words, to reason and reality. Walpole combines the present circumstances, his opposition to the rigid formality of French classicism and the prevailing realism of the novel, with the elements of reality from the past —the feudal system with its castles and

4. Stableford, Brian. *Historical Dictionary of Fantasy Literature*. Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 2005: 130; Clute, John; Grant, John, eds. *The Encyclopedia...*: 319.

5. Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto, A Gothic Story*. Philadelphia: Henry Carey Baird, 1854: 47.

6. Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto...*: XVI-XVII.

7. Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto...*: 5-6, 23, 201, 223-224.



values, in which “the welfare of the state depends on your Highness having a son”, the “church is an indulgent mother”, and the people’s actions are expected to correspond to their status, gender and title, so a knight should be “gallant and courteous”, whereas a woman should follow “a filial duty and womanly modesty”, which means that she has to submit to the will of her lord and marry in accordance with the family’s best interests.⁸

As this literary pattern of combining the ‘imagination and improbability’ with the ‘rules of probability’ is also recognizable in the group of works employing medievalism that are presently marketed as a variety of sub-genres of fantasy, the second preface to Walpole’s counterfeit medieval romance, which explains why such a literary mode was reinvented, written and published long after the Middle Ages had ended, seems convenient to be used as a starting point in an attempt to explicate why and to what end contemporary heroic fantasy and its sibling sub-genres readily incorporate medievalism.

One of the first reasons to list is the already mentioned market category that sells well. Accordingly, proliferation of medieval-based fantasies is a logical answer to the market demand. This group of sub-genres typically situated in the Medieval period: high fantasy, quest fantasy, epic fantasy, and their likes is thus called commodified fantasy, which is the term used by Ursula Le Guin pejoratively; however, as Stableford pointed out “it is by no means the case that all commodified fantasy is badly written”.⁹ Without any attempts to discuss the artistic values of this literary and/or market segment, one can logically conclude that its profitability and popularity justify frequent occurrence of medievalism in fantasy. However, there are other reasons which should be taken into consideration because they are far more interesting from the literary point of view.

Walpole’s ‘new species of romance’, its imagination and its Gothic features stirred the rationalistic spirits and their strict adherence to pure reason and the principles of French classicism, who saw the incorporation of medievalism in a literary work as advocating for “re-establishing the barbarous superstitions of Gothic devilism!”, to quote one reviewer of the *Otranto*. While Walpole’s contemporaries saw romances as too improbable, he accused the then modern novel of being too probable and of damming up “the great resources of fancy [...] by a strict adherence to common life”.¹⁰

Undoubtedly, no matter how creative and imaginative the worlds of fantasy are, they all have something in common—they are all directly or indirectly rooted in the world of reality. As Tzvetan Todorov pointed out, the fantastic deserves more than a mere mention and it is to be “defined in relation to those of the real and the imaginary”.¹¹ This is reflected in numerous definitions of the ‘fantastic’ and/or ‘fantasy’ that use reality as the starting point to explain and define this quite

8. Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto*...: 85, 89, 123, 136.

9. Stableford, Brian. *Historical Dictionary of Fantasy*...: 84.

10. Clery, Emma J. “The Genesis...”: 26.

11. Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1975: 25.



an elusive literary notion, either by stressing their differences, like Kathryn Hume who defined it as “[a]ny departure from consensus reality” or Eric S. Rabkin who called it the ‘polar opposite’ of reality; literature characterized by a ‘direct reversal of ground rules’ from those of everyday existence”,¹² or by emphasizing the similarities between them and how interlaced they are. As Scottish writer George MacDonald explained in his essay *The Fantastic Imagination* laws do not only exist in the natural world, but they are also present in the work of fiction and, as in the real world, imagination must submit to the laws that are systematic and logical and consistent in an imagined world as they are in the real one.¹³

Walpole’s then hybrid combination of the supernatural associated with the romance, on the one hand, and the natural characters and dialogues of the novel, on the other hand, is the recipe similar to the one employed by the twentieth and twenty-first century writers of fantasy, such as John R. R. Tolkien, Roger Zelazny, Bernard Cornwell, George R. R. Martin or Joe Abercrombie, to name a few, who used the elements of medievalism as building blocks of their fantastic worlds, populated by characters not very different from those found in mimetic fiction or present reality, even when they wield swords, practice magic or fight unnatural creatures and opponents.

Andrew Smith noted that Walpole’s “first preface helped to situate the novel as an ancient romance, dealing in fantastical improbability, whereas the second preface emphasised that the novel can be read ‘realistically’ —as ciphers for ‘real’ psychological situations and political circumstances”.¹⁴ Omens, prophecies, ghosts, a huge piece of armour, or a mysterious helmet that crushes the villain’s heir, and other appearances that oppose the principles of mimetic fiction, represent the cyphers for ‘psychological situations’ in the plot of Walpole’s *Otranto*. According to Anna Laetitia Aikin the goal of such frightening scenes is to incite pleasure produced by “the painful sensation immediately arising from a scene of misery” and terror that make us “desirous of again being witnesses to such scenes, instead of flying from them with disgust and horror”.¹⁵ While Aikin admitted the pleasure of witnessing the horrible and the fantastic as a form of intellectual stimulus, there are others who delve deeper into the unconscious, such as Howard P. Lovecraft who claimed that the “oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown”,¹⁶ or Freud, who analysed the relationship between fear and unknown through the ambivalent relationship between the *heimlich* and the *unheimlich*, which can be directly related to Walpole’s

12. Wolfe, Gary. “‘Fantasy’ from Critical Terms for Science Fiction and Fantasy”, *Fantastic Literature: A Critical Reader*, David Sandner, ed. Westport-London: Praeger Publishers, 2004: 273.

13. MacDonald, George. “The Fantastic Imagination”, *Fantastic Literature: A Critical Reader*, David Sandner, ed. Westport-London: Praeger Publishers, 2004: 64-69.

14. Smith, Andrew. *Gothic Literature*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007: 19.

15. Aikin, Anna Laetitia. “On the Pleasure Derived from Objects of Terror”, *Fantastic Literature: A Critical Reader*, David Sandner, ed. Westport-London: Praeger Publishers, 2004: 31.

16. Lovecraft, Howard Phillips. “Supernatural Horror in Literature”, *The H. P. Lovecraft Omnibus 2: Dagon and Other Macabre Tales*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994: 423.



merger of supernatural and the real, as well as to the relationship between fantasy and mimetic fiction.

Stephen R. Donaldson, an American novelist, compared fantasy to realistic fiction while explaining what fantasy is —“a form of fiction in which the internal crises or conflicts or processes of the characters are dramatized as if they were external individuals or events”.¹⁷ According to Donaldson, in realistic fiction the characters express their worlds, while in fantasies the worlds are actually the expressions of the characters.

Even if you argue that realistic fiction is about the characters, and that the world they live in is just one tool to express them, it remains true that the details which make up their world come from a recognized body of reality —tables, chairs, jobs, stresses which we all acknowledge as being external and real, forceful on their own terms. In fantasy, however, the ultimate justification for all the external details arises from the characters themselves. The characters confer reality on their surroundings.¹⁸

Accordingly, the relationship between the world(s) of fantasy and that of reality is not based on mere closeness, or similarities between them, but also on the idea that, at least in literature, they permeate each other. The worlds of fantasy are firmly rooted in reality, be it MacDonald's rules and principles that have to exist and work consistently within the imagined worlds as they do in the objective reality, or the feature of literature to mirror the world of reality owing to, among other things, the fact that all fictional worlds revolve around the common frame of archetypes that represent the windows into the human soul, society and the world in general. As Rosemary Jackson noticed,

Fantasy is not to do with inventing another non-human world: it is not transcendental. It has to do with inverting the elements of this world, re-combining its constitutive features in new relations to produce something strange, unfamiliar and *apparently* 'new', absolutely 'other' and different". Known worlds clothed in medieval and medieval-like realities are thus reworked into the above mentioned sub-genres of fantasy.¹⁹

These sub-genres of fantasy readily use and invert the elements of medieval Europe into something strange, different and unfamiliar, recombined to produce new fantastic worlds, different from the history of the one we know as the Earth. To achieve that, authors diffuse them with elements of imagination, with unnatural and supernatural occurrences, strange yet familiar at the same time. This is a productive recipe partly because they employ archetypal forms transmuted into manifestations that the average reader can perceive and understand, such as dragons, monsters,

17. Donaldson, Stephen R. *Epic Fantasy in the Modern World: A Few Observations*. Kent-Ohio: Kent State University Libraries, 1986: 3-4.

18. Donaldson, Stephen R. *Epic Fantasy...*: 4.

19. Jackson, Rosemary. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*. London-New York: Routledge, 1981: 8.



witches, and magic, and partly because they are happening in the world built on the foundations of the past reality that is distant enough to be easily related to the fantastic and supernatural, yet sufficiently familiar to an average reader, with its castles, feudal system, knighthood and chivalry, epic battles, kings and queens, priests, armours and weapons.

This mixture of the real and the invented is not a modern invention. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is a story about a knight who goes on an adventure with many fantastic experiences.

The 'Faerie' may with its strangeness and peril enlarge the adventure, making the test more tense and more potent, but Gawain is presented as a credible, living, person; and all that he thinks, or says, or does, is to be seriously considered, as of the real world.²⁰

Gawain, "the fair knight most faultless that e'er foot set on earth", goes to the tryst at the Green Chapel. This is a strange abode and "the worst wight in the world in that waste dwelleth".²¹ To make the story more credible, the author provided numerous and detailed descriptions of the court life, of "the knights most renowned after the name of Christ, / and the ladies most lovely that ever life enjoyed, / and he, king most courteous, who that court possessed", of the feasts where courses come "with fanfare of trumpets", of the clothing "with its soft lining" (...) "all fringed with white fur", of "a carpet of red silk" (...) "arrayed on the floor, / the gilded gear in plenty there glittered upon it"; of the weapons such as "a Danish axe newly dressed the dint to return, / with cruel cutting-edge curved along the handle - / filed on a whetstone, and four feet in width", and of nature that changes in accordance with the events.²²

Contrary to medieval works such as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, or *The Canterbury Tales*, there is a conspicuous absence of descriptions in Walpole's story, to highlight the dialogues and actions, popular in the modern novel. There is one notable exception, though. It is the description of the arrival of the Knight and the cavalcade, with "harbingers with wands", "a herald, followed by two pages and two trumpets", foot-guards, "footmen, clothed in scarlet and black, the colours of the Knight", two heralds bearing banners, then

Two more pages. The Knight's confessor telling his beads. Fifty more footmen clad as before. Two Knights habited in complete armour, their beavers down, comrades to the principal Knight. The squires of the two Knights, carrying their shields and devices. The Knight's own squire. A hundred gentlemen bearing an enormous sword, and seeming to faint under the weight of it. The Knight himself on a chestnut steed, in complete armour, his lance in the rest, his face entirely

20. Tolkien, John R. R. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Pearl and Sir Orfeo*, ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1975: 15.

21. Tolkien, John R. R. *Sir Gawain...*: 84, 77.

22. Tolkien, John R. R. *Sir Gawain...*: 26, 28, 39, 73, 80.



concealed by his vizor, which was surmounted by a large plume of scarlet and black feathers. Fifty foot-guards with drums and trumpets closed the procession, which wheeled off to the right and left to make room for the principal Knight.²³

Modern fantasists readily use and combine mythical and historical materials to develop stories appealing to contemporary readers. One the most notable among them is Tolkien, who “was, over time, influenced by his own personal medievalism, his profession as a medievalist, his relationships with other medievalists, and his own mythologizing in constructing his major fiction”.²⁴ In letter 131, to Milton Waldman of Collins, Tolkien wrote that he “had a mind to make a body of more or less connected legend, ranging from the large and cosmogonic to the level of the romantic fairy-story” which he could “dedicate simply: to England”.²⁵ According to Tolkien, it should possess “the clime and quality of the North West, meaning Britain and the hither parts of Europe; not Italy or Aegean, still less the east”, with “the fair elusive beauty that some call Celtic”. As Chance noticed, “the seeds for Tolkien’s ‘mythology for England’ sprang from those medieval literary, religious, and cultural sources and the ideas in which his life was steeped”.²⁶

Stableford noted that the borrowing of the themes and images from myth, legend and folklore in genre fantasy is frequently noticed by those aiming to define the genre fantasy and distinguish it from folktales and children’s fantasy as a genre read by adults, as well as that “the distinction between the mythical and historical pasts has never been clear and that much of what passes for history is, in fact, merely a concatenation of legends that we have chosen, for one reason or another, to believe”.²⁷

In the Middle Ages, the distinction between the real and the mythical past was not clear, as in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia regum Britanniae* or epics and other pieces of literature that merge the fantastic with historical events. As remarked in *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* “[m]uch world literature has been described, at one time or another, as fantasy” and before the sixteenth century and the scientific revolution, “most Western literature contained huge amounts of material 20th-century readers would think of as fantastical”.²⁸ Since the advent of science and technology caused the fantastic and the real to start parting in the minds of people, one cannot avoid noticing that authors’ use of medievalism may be an endeavour to take their readers into the time when the differences between imagination and reality were blurred and not so easily, so willingly, or so readily noticed and accepted.

Furthermore, weaving of the elements of the known world into fantasy helps readers to willingly suspend their disbelief, which is the effect Coleridge and Tolkien

23. Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto*...: 118-119.

24. Chance, Jane, ed. *Tolkien the Medievalist*. London: Routledge, 2003: 4.

25. Chance, Jane. *Tolkien’s Art: A Mythology for England*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2001: 1.

26. Chance, Jane. *Tolkien’s Art*...: 3.

27. Stableford, Brian. *Historical Dictionary of Fantasy*...: XXXIX.

28. Clute, John; Grant, John eds. *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*...: 337-338.



considered very important. In his essay *On Fairy-Stories* Tolkien, who distinguished between the Primary World, which is our reality, and the Secondary World, which is the fantasy world created by the writer, explained that the latter must be convincing, because the “moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed. You are then out in the Primary World again, looking at the little abortive Secondary World from outside”.²⁹ Borrowed elements of medievalism help the readers orientate themselves and navigate within the invented world of fantasy in which there may exist occurrences and laws substantially different from the ones present and at work in the world of reality.

These overt elements of medievalism are present in the representative examples of the fantasy genre —George R. R. Martin’s *A Song of Ice and Fire*, Bernard Cornwell’s *The Warlord Chronicles*, John R. R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*, Joe Abercrombie’s *The First Law* trilogy, Roger Zelazny’s *The Chronicles of Amber*, Robert Jordan’s *The Wheel of Time* series and numerous other examples of stories that are built upon the foundations of the medieval-like setting, system and society. Such fantasies are often written in several volumes, from trilogies like Tolkien’s and Abercrombie’s, to a collection of seven books planned by Martin for his *A Song of Ice and Fire* series, or Zelazny’s ten-volume *The Chronicles of Amber*, to Jordan’s almost monstrously long *The Wheel of Time* series consisting of 14 lengthy books. Written as collections of volumes they bear a likeness to medieval chronicles describing events through several generations and offering a detailed history of the (imaginary) world.

These series and standalone novels all include well-known and easily recognizable medieval elements: castles, fortified towns, mercenaries, knights and their codes of chivalry, and numerous other elements that demonstrate notable similarities in works, both old and new. In Martin’s *A Game of Thrones* the cavalcade arriving with the king to Winterfell is not very different from the one entering Otranto.

The visitors poured through the castle gates in a river of gold and silver and polished steel, three hundred strong, a pride of bannermen and knights, of sworn swords and freeriders. Over their heads a dozen golden banners whipped back and forth in the northern wind, emblazoned with the crowned stag of Baratheon.³⁰

As in Walpole’s *Otranto*, where the sole purpose of marriage is “to unite the claims of the two houses”,³¹ in *A Song of Ice and Fire* “marriage [is] made from politics, not passion”, so Ned’s daughter Sansa and prince Joff will marry only to join two houses.³² The roles of all individuals are well known from their birth.

Robb would someday inherit Winterfell, would command great armies as the Warden of the North. Bran and Rickon would be Robb’s bannermen and rule

29. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 2006: 132.

30. Martin, George R.R. *A Game of Thrones*. New York: Bantam Books, 2013: 32.

31. Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto...*: 112.

32. Martin, George R.R. *A Game...*: 306.



holdfasts in his name. His sisters Arya and Sansa would marry the heirs of other great houses and go south as mistress of castles of their own.³³

Like the Gawain poet, Martin provided numerous descriptions of life in his pseudo-medieval world. There are vivid descriptions of knights with gear and intricate suits “of white enameled scales, brilliant as a field of new-fallen snow, with silver chasings and clasps that glittered in the sun”; and of feasts, with meat “roasting for hours, turning slowly on wooden spits while kitchen boys basted them with butter and herbs until the meat crackled and spit”.³⁴ Martin’s kingdoms of Westeros, Zelazny’s Amber, Abercrombie’s Union are fictional worlds built on historical foundations. As in medieval Europe, noblemen pledge allegiance and pay homage to kings, in a society with familiar feudal social, economic and political circumstances in which the “King needs money, so he squeezes the nobles. The nobles squeeze their tenants, the tenants squeeze the peasants”.³⁵ Other ingredients of medievalism recognizable from history include the king’s small council in Martin’s series that reminds of Witan, feudal conflicts among the kingdoms of Westeros not very different from the wars among the medieval Anglian and Saxon kingdoms and the Wars of the Roses, or in Abercrombie’s series exclusive royal licences for trade to merchants and guilds similar to those granted during the Tudors. In both Martin’s and Abercrombie’s works plagues decimate the population like in the Middle Ages, and their corrupt clergy could easily fit into Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* and Langland’s *Piers Plowman*. In all the abovementioned standalone fantasy novels and series the warriors have medieval weapons, such as axes, maces, swords, spears, armours, and heraldry, coats of arms, and banners, worn and wielded by landowning gentry and peasants. They all paint an overall picture of the world in which life resembles the one led in medieval Europe —civilized kingdoms surrounded by wilderness, wildlings and geographical areas yet to be discovered, conquered and civilized, usually drawn on medieval-like maps attached to the story.

In addition to the elements of reality, borrowed from both historical and literary sources, contemporary fantasies, like their medieval predecessors, also incorporate and heavily rely on the fantastic. The Green Knight, “a perilous horseman, / the mightiest on middle-earth in measure of height” and many other marvels that Gawain faces, ‘the worms he wars’, ‘the wolves’, ‘wood-trolls that wandered in the crags’, ‘bulls’, ‘bears and boars’ and ‘ogres’³⁶ and other supernatural beasts, usually magnified to great proportions, as well as medieval magic, prophecies, artefacts and omens, like those in *Otranto*, represent impressive portents of what is to come, or mighty adversaries that the protagonists have to face. There are numerous examples of supernatural and unnatural creatures in Martin’s series —beasts like dragons, or direwolves that “will rip a man’s arm off his shoulder as easily as a dog will kill a

33. Martin, George R.R. *A Game...*: 45.

34. Martin, George R.R. *A Game...*: 120, 250.

35. Abercrombie, Joe. *The Blade Itself (The First Law: Book One)*. New York: Pyr, 2007: 262.

36. Tolkien, John R. R. *Sir Gawain...*: 28, 43.



rat", stories told by Old Nan about ghosts and "dungeons where terrible things had been done, and dragon heads on the walls".³⁷ The White Walkers, like incarnations or allegories of Black Death or the Horseman of the Apocalypse, are

cold things, dead things, that hated iron and fire and the touch of the sun, and every creature with hot blood in its veins. They swept over holdfasts and cities and kingdoms, felled heroes and armies by the score, riding their pale dead horses and leading hosts of the slain. All the swords of men could not stay their advance, and even maidens and suckling babes found no pity in them.³⁸

Martin's red witch Melisandre, wizards and mages like Gandalf in Tolkien's fantasies, Dwokin in Zelazny's *Chronicles of Amber*, or Bayaz in Abercrombie's series, are not very different from their medieval counterparts Merlin and Morgan le Fay. The examples are too many to be listed all.

There is another particularly interesting parallel. Modern fantasies also make use of the old beliefs in the strong connections between nature, supernatural and divine powers. Tolkien's elves and their love of nature are perhaps the most striking example. Lothlórien, on the one hand, "is the fairest of all the dwellings" of elves where "the boughs are laden with yellow flowers; and the floor of the wood is golden, and golden is the roof, and its pillars are of silver, for the bark of the trees is smooth and grey".³⁹ Mirkwood, on the other hand, "is dark, dangerous and difficult", "in there the wild things are dark, queer, and savage", the trees are "huge and gnarled, their branches twisted" and their leaves "dark and long".⁴⁰ In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, when nature reflects the warmth of Arthur's castle and the known world in general, "flowers there open", "shining rain is shed in showers", "birds are busy a-building and bravely are singing" and "blossoms burgeon and blow".⁴¹ Later, however, when it reflects the perils of the unknown, it is changed.

This oratory looks evil. With herbs overgrown
it fits well that fellow transformed into green
to follow here his devotions in the Devil's fashion.⁴²

Martin's series also contains passages that remind of this relationship. Like the Green Chapel, a place of old, seen as the pagan counterpart of the places of religion in the known world, the Godswoods in the North, dedicated to the Old Gods of the forests, are different from those in the South, which are "bright and airy", with "tinkling streams", birds singing "from hidden nest" and the air "spicy with the

37. Martin, George R.R. *A Game...: 17, 64.*

38. Martin, George R.R. *A Game...: 203.*

39. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Fellowship of the Ring*. New York: Ballantine Books/Del Ray, 2012: 375.

40. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Hobbit*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1982: 131, 134.

41. Tolkien, John R. R. *Sir Gawain...: 37.*

42. Tolkien, John R. R. *Sir Gawain...: 79.*



scent of flowers". "The gods of Winterfell kept a different sort of wood. It was a dark, primal place, three acres of old forest untouched for ten thousand years as the gloomy castle rose around it".⁴³

Definitions and inherent features of the fantasy genre show that no clear line can or should be drawn between the fantastic and the real. Accordingly, it is not surprising that fantasies abound with passages, doorways, mirrors and other paraphernalia serving to directly link the two, as in Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. An interesting example is Roger Zelazny's *The Chronicles of Amber* about a medieval-like world and its numerous shadow-worlds including the one that readers can recognize as their own objective reality. Not only are there connections and pathways for the members of the royal family to roam freely from one shadow-world to another, but the level of reality of the known world is degraded in this fantasy because, in the hierarchy of realness, it is positioned below the world of Amber. The only true world is Amber, it "had always been and always would be, and every other city, everywhere every other city that existed was but a reflection of a shadow of some phase of Amber".⁴⁴ The medieval-like world of Amber substitutes the world of known reality and takes its place thus becoming more real than the 'real' one.

Stephen R. Donaldson noticed that

all English epics are fantasy, in the sense that they contain magic, all present supernatural perceptions of reality. From *Beowulf*, *The Faerie Queene*, and *Paradise Lost* to *Idylls of the King* and *Lord of the Rings*, the English tradition of the epic is clear.⁴⁵

In his essay *Epic Fantasy in the Modern World* Donaldson used these taproot texts to explain the way humankind looked at themselves, as they "articulated the best religious and cultural, the best social and psychological self-perceptions of their times". According to Donaldson, these texts show how "our perception of ourselves becomes smaller and smaller" and, as he noted, by Milton's time the role of humans in the epic became irrelevant.⁴⁶ It is Tolkien who "restored the epic to English literature. Roughly a century after the epic became an impossible literary form, he made it possible to write epics again".⁴⁷

Tolkien, a *Beowulf* and *Gawain* scholar, and perhaps the most popular and beloved fantasist of the twentieth century, made it possible by rekindling the old tales⁴⁸ and their heroes, knights, magic, dragons and other elements of their worlds into a new fantasy sub-genre. *Beowulf* was written by the author who used "afresh ancient and

43. Martin, George R.R. *A Game...*: 18.

44. Zelazny, Roger. *The Chronicles of Amber*. London: Gollancz, 2000: 78.

45. Donaldson, Stephen R. *Epic Fantasy...*: 9-10.

46. Donaldson, Stephen R. *Epic Fantasy...*: 12.

47. Donaldson, Stephen R. *Epic Fantasy...*: 14.

48. Tolkien did not consider them epics, as explained in his essays "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics" and "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight".



largely traditional material”⁴⁹, whereas *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is another example of story “made of tales often told before and elsewhere, and of elements that derive from remote times, beyond the vision or awareness of the poet: like *Beowulf*, or some of Shakespeare’s major plays, such as *King Lear* or *Hamlet*”.⁵⁰ As Tolkien pointed out, there are older myths behind the story of Gawain, wherein one can hear the echoes of ancient cults, beliefs and symbols, yet this story is “not about those old things, but it receives part of its life, its vividness, its tension from them”.⁵¹ These older, essential structures incorporated into the medieval stories originate from myths, with heroes following the standard path of the mythological adventure, whose formula was defined by Joseph Campbell.

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.⁵²

This ‘world of common day’, of course, is a world of fantasy to the reader, yet it is common to the hero. And here lies the beauty of fantasy. The fantasy worlds, with all their wonders and oddities, are common to their heroes and other inhabitants. As such, they are reflections of the reader’s objective reality. For this reason, the authors do what they can to make them, if not common, then at least fairly commoner to their readers as well. Such fantastical worlds, although invented, are intricately and persuasively developed into believable creations that allow the readers to imagine them, navigate through them and quickly and easily suspend their disbelief in spite of all the supernatural and unnatural occurrences that they contain.

As mentioned above, works of fantasy with elements of medievalism often imply the presence and use of magic. Sometimes it is fully functional, as it was believed to be in the Middle Ages when people were burned at stakes for practicing magic, witchcraft and devilism. Sometimes it is only imagined. Magic in some works of fiction represents a reflection of the medieval fears and superstition, when it actually ‘worked’ only because people believed in it. Bernard Cornwell re-enacted such relationship between magic and superstition in his *Warlord Chronicles* by showing that magic can exist if one believes in it, or it can simply be regarded as an ability of clever individuals to deceive superstitious people who are willing to suspend their disbelief in magic, in real and fantastic worlds alike.

In Cornwell’s trilogy there is a notable withdrawal of magic that goes away along with the skilful mage Merlin. Such waning of magic is not uncommon in fantasy. Some examples include Lord Dunsany’s *The King of Elfland’s Daughter*, where the magic ebbs away along with the world of Faerie and John R. R. Tolkien’s *The Lord*

49. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Monsters...*: 9.

50. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Monsters...*: 72.

51. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Monsters...*: 73.

52. Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. London: Fontana Press, 1993: 30.



of the *Rings* in which the elves return to the undying lands. In Abercrombie's *First Law* trilogy the mage Bayaz stated that "the magic ebbs away", that it "leaks out of the world",⁵³ and in George R. R. Martin's series dragons become progressively smaller from one generation to another, from "the three great monsters of song and story" to "the smallest; a matched pair no bigger than mastiff's skulls, and oddly misshapen".⁵⁴ With the arrival of the age of reason dragons and magic did ebb away from the world and were left behind in the past, suppressed by the wonders of science and technological advancement that lifted the veil of superstition and supernatural. Maybe this is why it is so tempting and appealing to return into this world of fantasy with the stories set in the Dark Ages or pseudo-medieval earth-like worlds in which magic and the fantastic still shape the lives of everyone.

As Tolkien wrote, "[t]here are in any case many heroes but very few good dragons" and "dragons, real dragons, essential both to the machinery and the ideas of a poem or tale, are actually rare. In northern literature there are only two that are significant".⁵⁵ The two that he singled out are the dragon of the *Völsungs*, *Fáfnir*, and Beowulf's bane. A dragon in a fantasy is not an allegory, it is "no idle fancy", but "a potent creation of men's imagination, richer in significance than his barrow is in gold".⁵⁶ And as evidence of this statement he created "a most specially greedy, strong and wicked worm called Smaug".⁵⁷ Smaug, like Beowulf's bane, is more than a simple allegory. Like Beowulf's dragon, this worm is not a "plain pure fairy-story dragon", as it "approaches *draconitas* rather than *draco*: a personification of malice, greed, destruction (the evil side of heroic life), and of the indiscriminating cruelty of fortune that distinguishes not good or bad (the evil aspect of all life)".⁵⁸ People still make and write myths, modelled on those found in old stories and Tolkien's novels are evidence of this. They are those "great fantasies, myths and tales" that Le Guin had in mind when she wrote that fantasies "are like dreams: they speak *from* the unconscious *to* the unconscious, in the *language* of the unconscious – symbol and archetype", the stories that "use words" but, like music, "short-circuit verbal reasoning, and go straight to the thoughts that lie too deep to utter".⁵⁹ Smaug can be placed among those manifestations that Le Guin regarded as archetypes translated, with the "language of the night" as she called it, from the realm of the unconscious to the world of fantasy.

The Witch, the dragon, the hero; the night journey, the helpful animal, the hidden treasure... we all know them, we recognize them (because, if Jung is right, they

53. Abercrombie, Joe. *The Blade*...: 102.

54. Martin, George R.R. *A Game*...: 102.

55. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Monsters*...: 17, 12.

56. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Monsters*...: 16.

57. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Hobbit*...: 23.

58. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Monsters*...: 17.

59. Guin, Ursula K. Le. *The Language of the Night, Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction*, ed. Susan Wood. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1979: 62.



represent profound and essential modes of thought). Modern fantasy attempts to translate them into modern words.⁶⁰

Tolkien's Smaug is an archetype translated into modern words, although cloaked in the medieval form. This is why it is still so very much alive and will stay so, regardless of the time when *The Hobbit* is read, just like his medieval counterpart in *Beowulf*.

In addition to immersing the eager reader into the wondrous age of dragons and medieval magic, there is another reason to set fictional worlds into such historical or pseudo-historical environments. New technological solutions and scientific discoveries are so fantastical that they almost resemble magic. However, the arrival of the new age always brings uncertainties and the feeling that something will be lost, that the common and known world is dissolving into something new and that the loss of known forces that have kept the world together will result in chaos. With the end of the Middle Ages the balance between the centrifugal and centripetal forces of fantasy and reality was lost and the world changed irrevocably. In the minds of the writers and readers starved of magic, not always for the better. The loss of old values and the arrival of the new ones does not necessarily imply enthusiasm, not in literature, as Walpole showed, and not in real life. People were sceptical about the machines when they started replacing manual labour. The nuclear bomb ended the Second World War; however, such frightening scientific breakthrough with devastating consequences that marked the beginning of the nuclear age fuelled fears of misuse and irresponsible use of technology. In the second half of the twentieth century, writers of the New Wave and cyberpunk science fiction often wrote about the dangers of androids, robots, biological weapons, and other scientific and technological world-changing wonders. Some new Luddites may start wrecking robots in factories any day now.

"Long ago, before there was a Union, Middelrand was made of many petty kingdoms, often at war with one another, rising and falling with the passing years".⁶¹ Medieval Europe or England, as it is commonly the case, is not very different from this passage that refers to the history of Abercrombie's fictional medieval-like Circle of the (known) World in its large kingdoms of the Union, Gurkhul and the North, peoples and their lives, problems and relationships are very similar to those that existed in the Middle Ages. Thus we come to the ciphers for 'real' political circumstances mentioned by Smith. As Italo Calvino noted, "[d]uring the twentieth century, intellectual (no longer emotional) fantasy has become uppermost: play, irony, the winking eye, and also a meditation on the hidden desires and nightmares of contemporary man".⁶² Contemporary politics, national and international, are not

60. Guin, Ursula K. Le. *The Language...*: 12.

61. Abercrombie, Joe. *The Blade...*: 351.

62. Calvino, Italo. "Definitions of Territory: Fantasy", *Fantastic Literature: A Critical Reader*, David Sandner, ed. Westport-London: Praeger Publishers, 2004: 134.



very different from medieval struggles to come to power, influence monarchs, or replace them on their thrones.

As mentioned earlier, fantasies are reflections of the objective reality, its mirror-images, although twisted and reshaped by imagination. Unlike realistic fiction in which the characters are expressions of the world they live in, fantasy has the ability to externalize what is inside the characters, according to Donaldson who saw epics as recordings of “the way humankind looked at itself”, as they “articulated the best religious and cultural, the best social and psychological self-perceptions of their times”.⁶³

Contemporary fantasies reflect the perception of the time they are written in. Naturally, a lot has changed since the Middle Ages, which is why heroes like Gawain, the ideal knight with knightly virtues, are long gone and not all heroes fulfil their quests and return from their adventures with their heads on their shoulders. Ned Stark from George Martin’s *A Game of Thrones* is one of such unlucky heroes. Gawain, who takes up the challenge and “stoutly dare strike one stroke for another”⁶⁴ to protect his king from peril and indignity, goes on a quest of which the probable end is death by decapitation and he “accepts this challenge to deal the blow *quatsso bifallez* after (‘whatever the consequences’)”.⁶⁵ Like Gawain, Theodore in *Otranto* kneels “down, and prepare[s] to receive the fatal blow” and, being an innocent and virtuous person, keeps his head on his shoulders.⁶⁶ In Martin’s novel, Ned Stark accepts the duty expected of a king’s knight and goes to a perilous place alone and unprotected. Like Gawain, he is, after all, only human and possesses a fault, which makes him a perfect knight in his imperfection. He also comes to a castle where he is to be challenged. In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, “our poet is bringing Gawain to no haunt of demons, enemies of human kind, but to a courteous and Christian hall”.⁶⁷ This Christian place is not only a symbol of Christian values, but also of a real place in the real world, not a castle one can expect to find in a fairy-tale. Like the fantastic that comes to Arthur’s court in the form of the enchanted Green Knight, a symbol of older beliefs and forces that shaped and governed the pre-Christian world, the fantastic in contemporary fantasies comes to the reader’s world of reality in the form of medieval-like world. And its heroes, quests and their outcomes are a reflection of their authors’ world.

As in the story about Gawain, in *A Game of Thrones* the castle in King’s Landing, the capital of the Seven Kingdoms, is not a place where fairies and ogres dwell. As a mirror-image of the time when it is written, however, it is not a chivalrous place where one can expect of its inhabitants to be courteous, moral, and virtuous. Instead of being a symbol of knighthood and knightly conduct, its king does not come from the hunt with a boar but is killed by one. Like Gawain, Ned Stark successfully

63. Donaldson, Stephen R. *Epic Fantasy*...: 10.

64. Tolkien, John R. R. *Sir Gawain*...: 32.

65. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Monsters*...: 75.

66. Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto*...: 97.

67. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Monsters*...: 78.



answers to perils, temptations and trials, but this is exactly the reason why he must perish. Both Gawain and Ned Stark deal one fatal blow at the beginning, in wintertime. After Ned Stark's strike blood "sprayed out across the snow, as red as summerwine",⁶⁸ and after Gawain's blow "the blood burst from the body, bright on the greenness".⁶⁹ Unlike Gawain, who survives the challenge and the blow that he is willing to take for the king and for himself, and unlike Walpole's virtuous Theodore, in Martin's reflection of the contemporary reality masked with the medieval-like folklore, customs and décor, Ned Stark is decapitated. This virtuous knight who accepts the challenge to protect his flawed king has to perish, so the strike of the blade is fatal for him. To borrow Tolkien's observation about Gawain quoted from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, "Gawain with his olde curteisye goes back into Fairye".⁷⁰ In our present reality, which the authors of contemporary fantasies and their readers know and live in, acts of hospitality, courtesy and chivalry are not necessarily rewarded. Not even in their fiction, in which, as a reflection of our times, heroes like Zelazny's Corwin of Amber, Abercrombie's Glokta, or Donaldson's Thomas Covenant, are far from being perfect knights governed by noble principles. And in spite of 'Faerie', like Gawain, who is "presented as a credible, living, person", everything they think, say or do, "is to be seriously considered, as of the real world".⁷¹

In an article on *A Song of Ice and Fire*, historian Dr. Kelly DeVries noticed that Martin's world is modelled after medieval England, partly because Martin himself encouraged such comparisons since he admits that he reads everything he can get his hands on medieval history. A particularly interesting part of the article is the one which explains how and why Martin's work is not very realistic, giving detailed differences between the fictional world and reality. DeVries's argument that "[n]o Geat named Beowulf ripped the arm off a monster named Grendel and then fought the monster's mother in a cave"⁷² effectively sums it all up. It is the writer's imagination, and not his reliance on reality, that is truly captivating about this fictional world.

Owing to Tolkien's "love for Germanic medieval sources", as noted by Chism, when "critics and reviewers began to suggest analogues for *The Lord of the Rings* in the progress of World War II and modern industrialization [...] Tolkien dismissed such readings as allegories".⁷³ In the Foreword to *The Fellowship of the Ring* he wrote that his novel was not intended to convey inner meanings or messages, that it "is neither allegorical nor topical", that he "cordially dislike[s] allegory in all its manifestations, and always ha[s] done so", and that the "real war does not resemble

68. Martin, George R.R. *A Game...*: 12.

69. Tolkien, John R. R. *Sir Gawain...*: 35.

70. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Monsters...*: 100.

71. Tolkien, John R. R. *Sir Gawain...*: 15.

72. DeVries, Kelly. "Game of Thrones as History: It's Not as Realistic As It Seems-and That's Good". *Foreign Affairs*. 29 March 2012, The Council of Foreign Relations. 2 February 2014. <<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137363/kelly-devries/game-of-thrones-as-history>>.

73. Chism, Christine. "Middle-earth, the Middle Ages, and the Aryan Nation: Myth and History in World War II", *Tolkien the Medievalist*, Jane Chance, ed. London: Routledge, 2003: 63-64.



the legendary war in its process or its conclusion". "If it had inspired or directed the development of the legend", as he wrote, the story would have ended differently, and so would its heroes and villains.⁷⁴

When asked whether his novels are allegories Martin answered that they are not. As he explained in an interview, "I agree with Tolkien, in the sense that you really don't want to inject any sort of allegory and satire or contemporary political issues into your medieval fantasy".⁷⁵ So if the writers do not write their medieval fantasies with such an intention, how come that they are so widely popular and read all over the world in the modern times? What is it in the worlds modelled on the Medieval period that draws the readers to find them still fresh and easy to relate to? Half of the answer lies in the writer's imagination. Another half is found in the elements of reality. As Martin explained in the same interview, "there are certain universal themes. There are certain things that I'm trying to say about politics, governance, the use of power, kings, and all of that stuff."

Writers can create and use medieval-like worlds as reflections of contemporary circumstances and the world of objective reality because not a lot has actually changed in the human nature since the Dark Ages. In spite of numerous scientific breakthroughs and technological inventions that are borderline fantastic and that have changed the world beyond recognition, people are still governed by the same urges, needs, desires, and fears. As one of Abercrombie's characters noticed, many are shaped by material wealth.

'The world changes, Glokta, the world changes. The old order crumbles. Loyalty, duty, pride, honour. Notions that have fallen far from fashion. What has replaced them?' [...] 'Greed. Merchants have become the new power in the land. Bankers, shopkeepers, salesmen. Little men, with little minds and little ambitions. Men whose only loyalty is to themselves, whose only duty is to their own purses, whose only pride is in swindling their betters, whose only honour is weighed out in silver coin.'⁷⁶

This is just one of the themes that is constantly present in human life and nature. It seems that the writers of fantasy have found the worlds built on medieval foundations to be effective reverberators of many universal themes that remain interesting, appealing and worth repeating in the world of present-day reality, and fantasies.

Contemporary fantasists use medievalism to place their fictional worlds into a blurry area where fantasy and reality overlap, halfway between the age when magic was still believed to exist, and the one from which supernatural has ebbed with the advance of science and technology. In a sense, the Medieval period is halfway between fantasy and reality. Moreover, due to the advancements in science and

74. Tolkien, John R. R. *The Fellowship of the Ring*...: X.

75. Radish, Christina. "George R. R. Martin Interview Game Of Thrones". *Collider.com*. 17 April 2011, Complex Media Inc. 2 February 2014 <<http://collider.com/george-r-r-martin-interview-game-of-thrones/#vRpQErrvGW6P8Rou.99>>.

76. Abercrombie, Joe. *The Blade*...: 85.



technology the line between the magic of the past and the science of the present is another fuzzy area, which is why, as Philip K. Dick said, “magic equals science... and science (of the future) equals magic”.⁷⁷ As such, contemporary fantasists borrow the elements from the Middle Ages to build an effective bridge between fantasy and reality, creating thus a new species of romance that brings together ‘imagination and improbability’ and ‘common life’. The fact that contemporary readers readily cross that bridge justifies the fantasists’ willingness to use Walpole’s recipe that was, conveniently so, written in the 18th century, which is halfway between the Middle Ages and their own reality.

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MEDIEVAL HISTORY IN THE CATALAN RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS (2003-2009)

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ABSTRACT

The Catalan researchers in Medieval History during the period 2003-2009 had reached 3,393,339.77 € for research projects and published 1,249 articles, chapters and books, of which only 11.04% were written in a language other than Catalan or Spanish, although most of the authors had an adequate level of internationalization and taking part of the main lines of research's innovation. Researchers must combine research, teaching and the management of its centers. The posts are funded according not research but teaching necessities, and the authorities promote hired places more than civil servants.¹

KEYWORDS

Research, Researchers, Funds, Medieval History, Catalonia.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Investigatio, Investigatores, Pecuniae, Historia Mediaevalis, Catalonia.

This article analyses a host of data —bibliometric, budgetary and others— to analyse the scientific production on the Middle Ages produced in Catalonia between 2003 and 2009, and extracts conclusions about the impact and significance of the research in the field of medieval history from these that aim to be objective.² This work is really the full version of a report requested by the Institut d'Estudis Catalans in 2012, in its concern, shared with the *Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca*, to carry out a critical follow up of the research in Catalonia. That is why an abridged version is included in the report on research into history,³ which is more important as it enables the data to be compared with those from previous periods studied in earlier reports by the *Institut d'Estudis Catalan* ("Catalan Studies Institute"), these being 1990-1995⁴ and 1996-2001.⁵

In accordance with the earlier works, the research in this study focuses on the public universities. More for formal reasons, this perspective has been maintained because although the private universities that have appeared in a Catalonia (Universitat Abat Oliba CEU, Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, Universitat Ramon Llull) have included studies like the Humanities in their offer, they have yet to develop areas of research into medieval history and have not focussed on the dynamics of seeking and managing resources in their field of research in the same way as the regulated research in public institutions.

Especially rigorous research into the medieval period in Catalonia has been undertaken in various periods, with a certain cadence over the last quarter of the 20th century and stretching into the 21st, denoting an urge for reflection and criticism.⁶

1. Abbreviations used: BP, Programa Beatriu de Pinós; CSIC, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. Institució Milà i Fontanals; CU, Catedràtic d'Universitat; JdC, Programa Juan de la Cierva; RyC: Programa Ramon y Cajal; TEU, Titular d'Escola Universitària; TU, Titular d'Universitat; UAB, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; UB, Universitat de Barcelona; UdG, Universitat de Girona; UdL, Universitat de Lleida; UPE, Universitat Pompeu Fabra; URV, Universitat Rovira i Virgili.

2. The basis for this article is the study of the volume obtained after accumulating a host of data and counting them with numerical precision. Thus, I wish to thank the generous supply of data from my fellows working in the same area, which has allowed me to make a detailed percentual concretion, and also the atmosphere of reflection provided by my Brazilian colleagues which facilitated the writing of these lines from a desired distance found in the Universidade Federal do Paraná and Universidade Federal do Mato Grosso, in spring 2012.

3. Sabaté, Flocel. "Història Medieval". *Reports de la recerca a Catalunya. 2003-2009. Història*, Antoni Simon, ed. October 2014, Institut d'Estudis Catalans. 2 November 2014 <http://www.iec.cat/reports/reports3/Historia0309_definitiu.pdf>: 37-73.

4. Balcells, Albert, ed. *Reports de la recerca a Catalunya. Història*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 1998.

5. Balcells, Albert, ed. *Reports de la recerca a Catalunya. 1996-2002. Història*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 2005.

6. Aside from sectoral considerations, the overall contribution in the area of medieval history has been undertaken as follows: Batlle, Carme; Ferrer, Maria Teresa. "Balanz de les activitats historiogràfiques referents a l'edat mitjana a la postguerra franquista". *Cuadernos de Historia Económica de Cataluña*, 19 (1978): 321-330; Salrach, Josep Maria. "Balance crítico y perspectivas de la producción historiográfica sobre historia medieval catalano-balear en la década 1978-1986". *Studia Historica. Historia Medieval*, 6 (1988): 95-139; Salrach, Josep Maria. "Noves recerques i interpretacions sobre la història medieval general i de Catalunya en particular". *Balma. Didàctica de les ciències socials, geografia i història*, 2 (1995):



Within this dynamic, there was a great deal of research activity in medieval history in Catalonia in the 2002-2009 period, a fact reflected in the number of publications. This links in to other positive factors, such as attracting resources, but also other more doubtful aspects, like the real degree of internationalisation. In all cases, what stands out is the challenges from the institutional research structure and the permanent demands for researchers to adapt to the new formal frameworks.

1. Infrastructure, human and economic resources

Research requires a foundation that cannot be overlooked but requires a detailed analysis to assess precisely what the real capacity of the centres is, the amount of researchers and the funding.

1.1 Universities and CSIC

In the period under consideration, researchers in medieval history in Catalonia were spread around seven research centres of varying size. None of these had its own administrative and organisational units, but in all cases, trying to achieve a conceptual coherence, which was well defined in two centres: the Institució Milà i Fontanals, part of the CSIC, and the UB. In the former, the medievalists share the Department of Medieval Studies with other areas that also study the Middle Ages, a pairing that currently takes the form of a researcher in philology. In the latter, which includes almost a third of all the medievalists in Catalonia, it constituted the Department of Medieval History, Palaeography and Diplomatics together with the teachers and researchers from the area of Historiographic Sciences and Techniques. In the UAB, the medievalists still follow this scheme, further adding various areas that can be included within the 'Sciences of Antiquity', while, in much smaller numbers, in the UdL they are included within the Department of History, in the URV in that of History and Art History, in the UdG in Geography, History and Art History and in the UPF in a generic department of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The immediate consequence is that the structuring into the university departments has little effect on the research task. The researchers, following their respective lines, have created their own synergies from their activities and research projects and the consolidation of the research groups. Significantly, there is no department where the teachers have shared the same research units. This bias is shown by the search by the researchers themselves for transversal formulae to enable them to link researchers from various centres, as well as approaching those in other departments

83-95; Riera, Antoni. "La Historia Medieval en Cataluña (1990-1995). Un balance breve de las últimas investigaciones". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 27/1 (1997): 501-567; Salrach, Josep Maria. "La història de Catalunya, avui. La llarga edat mitjana". *Butlletí de la Societat Catalana d'Estudis Històrics*, 25 (2014): 261-297.



in the same universities who are working on research into the same medieval period in other disciplines. This way, structures with greater incidence on the research have been stabilised, as with the development of the group recognised by the UdL in 2001 and stabilised in 2005 as the Consolidated Medieval Studies Research Group 'Space, Power and Culture', which aims to bring together researchers from different areas (history, art history, philology) who work on similar themes in medieval research in the UdL and the URV, and even more so, in 2008, when the UB created the Institute of Research into Medieval Cultures as its own research centre using a similar formula.

1.2 Other research centres

Apart from the mentioned centres, one must consider the place of the *Institut d'Estudis Catalan*, legally defined by its academic and scientific functions in Catalonia. Without its own researchers, but made up of members from other centres, it promotes and finances research programmes, publications and other action to encourage research into fields that, in the period studied, included medieval history.

Another area is the work of the local and district centres. These have a strong tradition in the Catalan social fabric, a long trajectory of making new contributions to medieval history and, in many cases, sustaining publications, especially district journals full of notable contributions to medieval history. The university training of many of their proponents (generally teachers, cultural managers in charge of such centres as archives, libraries or museums, etc.) ensures the quality of contributions that also contribute powerfully to a territorially balanced knowledge of what the Middle Ages were like in Catalonia with their numerous publications during the period studied. However, they cannot be considered research centres, because this title is reserved for those institutions that not only contribute new knowledge but also participate in an organised international system in scientific working. Nevertheless, we must value initiatives that connect this local work with the university setting very positively, as was the case in the period studied, of the *Coordinadora de Centres d'Estudis de Parla Catalana* ("Coordinator of Catalan Speaking Study Centres"), through scientific meeting and other activities.

1.3 Teaching and research personnel

In the period studied, great stability in the civil service bodies dedicated to research is perceived. At these levels, only one new post was created, in 2005, of a *Científic Titular* in the CSIC, which is a permanent inferior post as a civil servant. In the other cases, the changes were due to personal promotions without increasing the numbers of members of the research bodies. In the higher levels as civil servants —*catedràtics d'universitat* (CU) and *professors titulars* (TU), similar to professors and lecturers, respectively— in 2003, the UB increased the number of professors from



two to three; in the URV in 2008, the change was from three TUs and one CU to two TUs and two CUs, and in 2009, the UdL went from one CU and two TUs to two CUs and one TU, while in 2003, the post of TU in the UPF disappeared when the holder became a CU. Likewise, in 2003, in the CSIC, there was a change from a *científico titular* to a *investigador científico* (a middle permanent researcher post) and in 2009, from *científico titular* to research professor (the highest permanent level in the research centres). There were no changes in the two TUs in the UdG in that period. This shows that the tendency everywhere was to restrict access to these posts: only a single promotion in 2003 in the UB changed a TU from a post of *professor titular d'Escola Universitària*, while in later dates, stabilisation was sought through the formula of permanent contracts in the Catalan system. Some probationary appointments were not consolidated, as happened in the UB in 2003 when the previous holder of an interim post found provisional continuity as a *professor associat*.

The new hired posts (*lector* as an lower and temporary contract; and *agregat*, as a middle and permanent contract) allowed some researchers to be consolidated: in two cases in the UB (one from the temporary *ajudant LRU* and another one becoming first *associat* and then *lector*); two other cases in the UAB (both being previously *associat*, one of them reaching a post of *lector* in 2005 and a post of *agregat* in 2009, and another one earning a *lector* post in 2009) and one in the UPF, who went from *ajudant* to *lector* in 2006. Thus, the contractual graduation, becoming first *lector* and then *agregat*, appears as the preferred path for consolidating researchers in the period analysed.

Research activity has allowed the number of research places to be increased through the programmes of both the corresponding Spanish Ministry and the Catalan autonomous administration (*Generalitat de Catalunya*) for temporary research contracts. This meant that, between 2003 and 2004, the UB was able to enjoy one post for a postdoctoral researcher; in 2007, a researcher from the *Beatriu de Pinós* programme at the UdL was contracted; in 2008, the CSIC won another from the *Juan de la Cierva* programme, and the UdL, another high level one from the *Ramon y Cajal* programme; and that in 2009, the CSIC added a researcher also from the *Ramon y Cajal* programme, as well as another postdoctoral researcher through its own *JADE* programme. These figures not only injected vitality but also facilitated the recruitment of human capital from outside the Catalan research system: the four researchers who filled the most prominent posts (one *Beatriu de Pinós*, one *Juan de la Cierva* and two *Ramon y Cajal*) were from research centres outside Catalonia, three of them, foreign. The opposite of this fundraising is the lack of future perspectives. In none of the cases did the end of the contract lead to continuity with new researchers under the same figure, nor was there any offers to extend the research careers of those affected: during the period studied, the finalisation of the above-mentioned *Beatriu de Pinós* and *Juan de la Cierva* postdoctoral posts led to the holder of the first continuing his research career outside the Catalan system and the other two not finding any possibility of continuing in the world of research.

More irregularly, the obligations of management or specialisation in research that accompany the consolidated researchers enabled the creation of occasional teaching



posts that did not actually progress to research places but rather disappeared, as with the *associats* in the UdL between 2008 and 2009 and the addition of an *associat* in the UdG in 2009 and another in the UPF. In fact, these posts were added to those of *associats* that the UB and the UAB have notably enjoyed in the medieval field. These posts were created in function of the teaching requirements and not the research needs, which usually justify the limited financial resources they receive. However, these were filled by personnel who do research and, with this work, show their desire to contribute to the research career. In all these cases, the mobility and instability of these posts reflects a precariousness that contradicts the stability necessary for good research work. Over the period studied in all the Catalan universities, there were 23 associate teachers in the field of medieval history, of whom 26.08% remained in this situation and 30.48% ended up outside the research system. Among these, 21.74% continued their career through other precarious formulae in the same centre or another university, 4.33% moved outside Catalonia, another 4.33% achieved work in Catalonia but in another field of research and only 13.04% went on to become associates in higher posts in the current university framework, in the same centre and field of research, in all cases as *lector* or *agregat*. The hope that the figure of associate would allow university tasks to be combined with other professional activities was only the case in 10 of the 23 associates, employed in related activities (private universities, technical tasks in the same university, archives, archaeology, political-social management) and mainly —half, or five of the ten— in secondary teaching. This is a misleading formula: almost all these activities require high levels of dedication to activities not related to university research, which is why most of those involved do not view this duality as a complementarity of tasks and, would like the post of associate to be not just a mere complement but a prior stage in their consolidation in the university.

At the same time, the high research activity was reflected in the maintenance of very high numbers of grant holders in five centres, the UdL, UB, CSIC, UAB and UdG, which had 13, 12, 6, 4 and 3 grant holders respectively, in other words, 38 new researchers with provision for their doctoral training in medieval history. However, the difficulty with the later consolidation of these young researchers can be seen in their disappearance from the Catalan university system: of the 25 researchers who concluded their contracts in this period, only nine (six from the UB, two from the UdL and one from the UAB) continued their research careers in the field of medieval history during the period analysed.

The technical-scientific support for research was achieved through the figures of the existing research support technicians in the UB and the CSIC, in the former case with an associate teacher who, in the period studied, combined this role with another job and in the case of the CSIC, there was briefly, between 2005 and 2006, a specific post for this.

So, staffing is not envisaged in function of the research nor the research structures. The modifications respond more to legitimate rights for the promotion of personnel than to the curricular design of the research. Moreover, the evolution of the staff in the universities over the period studied shows the tendency to restrict the number



of teachers and researchers, freeze civil servant posts, promote the hired posts and limit the growth of the research posts. Among other effects, this led to a constant aging of the research staff (see attached table 1), although there was a marked difference between the centres around Barcelona and the other three —the UdG, the UdL and the URV—, which had a younger average. Only the consolidation of a research post in the CSIC in this period slowed down the progressive aging, which will be put to the test when, in the immediately following seven-year period, there will be a need to cover a greater number of retirements.

More evidence is that the number of researchers and their dedication depends on teaching requirements in all centres except the CSIC. In this sense, an increase in the teaching demands is perceived. The evolution of teaching in the same period entered into new curricular designs that required more dedication in all the teaching process and, moreover, a greater distancing between the contents of the teaching and the research. More generalist contents reduced the presence of specialised teaching to attract and lay the bases for future medievalists. The situation led to a veritable duality of tasks for the researcher and teacher, and teaching was seen, not as a complement, but more as a demand difficult to combine with the research task. To compensate for the high teaching loads, only the largest centre, the UB, was able to provide a sabbatical year almost annually for one of its consolidated professors (CU, TU and aggregates), while among the other centres, only the UdG was able to do so, in one case in the 2009-10 course. Moreover, inside each centre, the distribution is unequal, with no direct relation between a lower teaching load and greater scientific contribution, although all the universities adopted systems of internal evaluation that tended to apply a compensatory system to the activity of the researchers and teachers.

It must still be added that the members in all research centres have to fulfil management tasks, either in research or education. The comparative table by centres denotes a generally greater load in small universities, where the work has to be distributed between a smaller of teaching staff.

The contemporary increase in the demands in the forms and evaluation of the research accentuated the contradictions between these triple professional responsibilities: research, teaching and management. However, the research work done by the Catalan medievalists was mainly successful, as indicated by the recognition given to it. 62.5% of the researchers reached the research stretches awarded by the pertinent authority positively (*Comisión Nacional Evaluadora de la Actividad Investigadora* —CNEAI— in the case of the TUs and CUs, and *Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya* —AQU— in the case of *lectors* and *agregats*), which not only implies carrying out a good level of research but also knowing how to adequately orientate its scientific divulgation, in line with the quality parameters required. Then, there are other more specific indicators, like the two distinctions for research awarded to medieval researchers by the *Departament d'Universitats, Recerca i Societat de la Informació (DURSI)* of the Catalan autonomous Government during the period studied (one to the UdL between 2000 and 2004,



and another to the UdG between 2004 and 2008), in order to recognize an excellent level of research.

A final reflection is the unequal relationship between medievalists and palaeographers. The latter are not included in any of the statistical calculations and reflections in this report, given that they make up a specific area of Historiographic Sciences and Techniques. However, their work is very close to that of the medievalists, which is illustrated by their proximity in the organisational structure. They are found sharing departments with the medievalists in the UB, UAB, UdG and URV. The greatest presence was in the UB. In the period studied, there were two promotions from TU to CU (2004 and 2009), the retirement of two CUs (2003 and 2008), the continuity of one TU and the incorporation of a new TU in 2003; as well as the use of hired post to consolidate teachers: with the condition of *agregat* it was possible to consolidate an *associat* in 2006 and a *titular interí d'escola universitària* in 2009, while four new posts for *associats* were generated, one in 2006, two in 2008 and one in 2009. In the UAB, the post of CU was maintained, as well as that of an emeritus CU, and two TUs were generated, one in 2003 and another in 2009, cutting out their precedent posts: respectively, one *ajudant* and one *associat*; and also having a grant holder since 2007. Finally, the TUs in this area of Historiographic Sciences and Techniques in both the UdG and the URV remained stable.

Table 1. Number of researchers by centre

UB	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
CU	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
TU	9	9	8	8	8	8	8
Acting TU	1						
Acting TEU	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Agregat</i>		1	1	1	2	2	2
<i>Lector</i>			1	1	1		
<i>Associat</i>	4	4	4	4	2	3	2
<i>Ajudant</i>	1	1					
Postdoc.	1	1					
Grant holder	5	5	3	5	4	5	5

UAB	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
CU	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
TU	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
<i>Agregat</i>					1	1	1
<i>Lector</i>			1	1	1		1
<i>Associat</i>	4	4	4	5	5	4	5
Grant holder	1	1	1	1	2	2	3

UdG	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
TU	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<i>Associat</i>		1	1	1	1	1	2
Grant holder	3	3	3	3	3		

UdL	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
CU	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
TU	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
<i>Associat</i>							4
RyC					1	1	1
BP					1	1	1
Grant holder	7	8	6	6	5	3	4
Research technician							1

URV	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
CU	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
TU	3	3	3	3	3	2	2

UPF	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
CU	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
TU	1						
<i>Lector</i>				1	1	1	1
<i>Associat</i>	1	1	1	1			1



CSIC	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Research professor	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
<i>Investigador científico</i>	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
<i>Científico titular</i>	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
RyC						1	1
JdC						1	1
Post- Doctoral (JADE)							1
Grant holder	2	2	3	5	3	4	3
Research technician			1	1			

Table 2. Average age of stabilised researchers*

	2003	2009
UB	53.17	58.83
UAB	52.4	56.3
CSIC	54.25	52.75
UdG	41.5	47.5
UdL	43.7	49.7
URV	48.25	54.25
UPF	58	64

*CU, TU, AGREGATS (CSIC: PROFESOR DE INVESTIGACIÓN,
INVESTIGADOR CIENTÍFICO, CIENTÍFICO TITULAR)



Table 3. Average number of credits taught by the stabilised professors-researchers*

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
UB	21.83	18.58	21.33	17.2	15	12.84	13.50
UAB	13.64	17.40	18.25	20.30	20.18	20.16	20.12
UdG	24	21.75	22	21.25	20.50	20.35	20.50
UdL	18	16.6	20	17.66	21.66	21	15.66
URV	16.25	14.95	16.32	18.75	17.50	16.25	18.50
UPF	12	12	12	12	12	12	12

*CU, TU AND *AGREGATS*. 1 CREDIT = 10 HOURS TEACHING.

Table 4. Proportion of the management load of the centre (2003-2009) *

UdG	4.50
UdL	4.33
URV	3.50
UAB	2.18
CSIC	1.87
UB	1.33
UPF	0.90

*OBTAINED FROM THE TOTAL NUMBER OF YEARS WITH A POSITION OF RESPONSIBILITY DIVIDED BY THE NUMBER OF CONSOLIDATED RESEARCHERS (CU, TU AND *AGREGATS*).

1.4 Research groups, projects and agreements

The researchers accepted the research project as the basic element of their work. Only 4% worked outside research projects, another 2% participated occasionally and the remaining 94%, participated permanently in the competitive research projects.



Interdisciplinarity beyond the Middle Ages from a thematic and chronological point of view was a target in 11.11% of the projects. In the rest, the projects basically focussed on the medieval period, although they still included collaboration from other areas of knowledge dedicated to the study of the medieval History. Moreover, a certain transversality was also sought by gathering researchers from different centres around common research subjects. Thus, 22.22% of the researchers participated in projects led from other universities. The same figure enables us to think that the majority of the remainder participated in projects in the same centres. In a similar sense, a strong stability is perceived regarding the Lead Researcher or Principal Researcher (PI). Of the 23 researchers who appear as PI in projects in the 'National R+D+I Plan' awarded by the Spanish ministry during the period analysed, in 16 there was previous or posterior continuity in leading similar research.

The majority resort to the projects requested in the 'National R+D+I Plan', drawn up by the Ministry of Science and Technology in 2003 and, from 2004 on, by the Ministry of Science and Research (MICINN) is notable. In this framework, 31 projects in the medieval history research centres were managed during the period analysed. At the same time, the researchers also participated in public calls and won research projects called by the IEC, foundations and autonomous governments that issue this kind of call. It is also notable that the researchers excelled in capturing an important number of research grants, which meant the possibility of carrying out mobilising activities, such as scientific meetings and excavations. In most cases, these were competitive calls, although specific agreements must be included under the same heading.

At the same time, a willingness to internationalise can be perceived. Three universities (UdL, UAB, URV) led competitive research projects won in calls that required joint working with international teams, either through the programmes of the MICINN (*integrated actions*) or the Catalan autonomous government (*ACI*, and *Batista Roca programmes* awarded by the *Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca – AGAUR*). In the same sense, we must also add the agreements between the CSIC and research centres in Italy and Morocco. In contrast, the little participation in calls from the different European research organisms (especially the European Science Foundation —ESF—, European Research Council —ERC— and the European Commission —EC—) is surprising. In the period studied, only 12.74% of the researchers (from the UB, UAB and UdL) were part of research projects approved by European organisms, and there were only two projects led by Catalan universities (UAB, UdL).

Very closely associated research was undertaken from the area of historiographic Sciences and Techniques, which would add three projects from the National R+D+I Plan in the UAB and one in the UB, as well as one project by call from the same UB, as well as three grants won by the UB and six by the UAB.

The generalisation of the system of research projects places the participation of medieval research in the usual parameters for current scientific production. Moreover, it means that the researchers accept that they have to dedicate part of their research time to the bureaucratic work needed in drawing up, presenting



Table 5. Projects led by catalan research centres (2003-2009)

	European calls	State calls (National R+D+I Plan)	International projects (Integrated, international agreements, PBR etc..)	Research calls from regional entities (Autonomous Governments)	University calls	Calls by the IEC and founda-tions	Projects, grants and agreements for complementary activities to research (meetings, excavations)
UB	-	10	-	2	-	4	64
UAB	1	4	2	-	5	1	24
CSIC	-	7	2	-	-	1	9
UdL	1	5	4	-	-	1	68
UdG	-	2	-	1	-	-	-
URV	-	3	1	-	-	-	21
UPF	-	-	-	-	-	-	1



and managing projects, especially because they do not normally have qualified personnel available to do these tasks. Furthermore, the orientation of the research is evidently conditioned, not only thematically but also formally, because short research projects—in general three years—, with few financial resources, that require coherent working plans between various researchers to be drawn up and demand the publication of scientific results in the same period of execution, tend to lead to a sum of smaller contributions rather than research that can combine the depth of study with a wider overview.

The habit of team working that denotes the importance of the research projects matches the increase in the structuring into research groups. During the period studied, only 3.34% of the researchers did not belong to a consolidated research group (SGR) approved by the *Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca* (AGAUR). 6% of the teaching staff were included in chronologically transversal consolidated research groups and led from outside the medieval field. Notable among these were those led by anthropologists: the Social Anthropology Group at the URV and the Food Observatory (ODELA) at the UB. While the former led to a certain abandoning of the research lines promoted through medieval history, in the latter, a recognised line of research from medieval research into the history of food was coupled fruitfully into its line of work. The other medievalists congregated in groups led by medievalists, although these were also open to interdisciplinary inputs.

Thus, it can be considered that the research groups recognised by the AGAUR structure the research in medieval history. Significantly, the number of consolidated research groups increased, although this did not affect the lack of stability in the research structure. Three consolidated research groups were recognised in the three calls in the period studied: 2001, 2005 and 2009: the 'Medieval and Postmedieval Archaeology' Research Group at the UB and two groups in the CSIC: the 'Feudal Income and Taxation in Late Medieval Catalonia Group' and the 'Research Group of the Catalan-Aragonese Crown, Islam and the Mediterranean World'. This was extended in 2005 with the participation of a group based at the UdL, the 'Consolidated Medieval Studies Research Group Space, Power and Culture', which was validated in 2009, and, from this call on, with the incorporation of two other groups from the UAB- 'Occupation, Organisation and Defence of the Medieval Territory' and 'Agrarian Archaeology in the Middle Ages'. Then, in both the 2005 and 2009 calls, two more groups from the UB were added, one on gender studies with a wider chronological range, but led from the medieval field and well consolidated thanks to deep experience in the previous years —'Duoda Project. Virtual Library Duoda'— and another that evolved from an initial one orientated towards pedagogics in 2005, ('Taedium. Research Group on Medieval History and Innovation in University Teaching'), towards a specific orientation on texts in 2009: 'Research Group in Medieval History: Sources and Studies', leaving the previous focus in an internal educational section, recognised by the same university.

With 32 members in the biggest and eight in the smallest, the average number of researchers in the consolidated research groups was 16.37 and in all cases, these



Table 6. Members of consolidated research groups

GROUPS 2009 (by order of financing)	Researchers from the same centre	Informal links to the centre*	Researchers from other Catalan centres	Researchers from related Catalan centres (museums, archives...)	Researchers from other Spanish centres	Researchers from foreign centres
Medieval Studies Space, Power and Culture (UdL)	15	6	6	3	1	1
Medieval and Post-medieval Archaeology (UB)	5	1	2	3	2	5
Project Duoda - Virtual Library Duoda (UB)	3	3	1	1	3	0
Feudal Income and taxation in Late-medieval Catalonia (CSIC)	3	3	8	0	0	0
Occupation, Organisation and Defence of the medieval territory (UAB)	3	0	2	2	1	0
Medieval History. Sources and Studies (UB)	10	0	0	0	1	1
Agrarian Archaeology of the Middle Ages (UAB)	4	2	0	0	5	2
The Catalan-Aragonese Crown, Islam and the Mediterranean World (CSIC)	5	4	2	1	2	8

* THEY APPEAR FOR BEING INVOLVED IN RESEARCH WORK, EITHER PRE-DOCTORAL OR POST-DOCTORAL, OR COLLABORATIONS BY RETIRED PEOPLE FROM OUTSIDE THE OFFICIAL RESEARCH STRUCTURES.



were clearly inter-university, looking for synergies in the transversal themes chosen as common denominators, which also covered researchers from outside the scientific system. It was not laboratories that were added but rather individual researchers, often from different centres, including some from outside the Catalan research system with a clear bid to include foreign researchers, and the common denominator of working on similar themes. The dispersion inherent in this structure highlights the need to establish formulae of scientific connection between the members, while leaving a reflection open about the difficulties of management and regarding the ideal conditions for the correct and cohesive working of a research group.

While aiming to graduate the groups, the pertinent organism —AGAUR— awarded little initial generic grants to those who were most highly rated, who thus became financed groups. These were very limited donations, which could be increased for because being classed as ‘consolidated’ was taken into consideration when awarding new grants. Similarly, the different research centres tended to complete the generic grants in policies that, likewise usually establish a grading of the rest of the internal groups.

Table 7. Classification of consolidated research groups

	UB	UAB	CSIC	UdL
2003. Consolidated research groups	1F		2F	
2005. Consolidated research groups	3 N		2F	1F
2009. Consolidated research groups	2F 1N	1F 1N	1 F 1N	1F

GROUPS: F: FINANCED N: NOT FINANCED

The members of the area of Historiographic Sciences and Techniques also participated with interest in working in recognised research groups, again showing their proximity to medieval research through the presence of members of this area of knowledge in two of the consolidated research groups led by medievalists in the UB. More specifically, in 2009, in the same SGR call, the UAB obtained the rating of emerging Singular Research Group (GRS) for the group led from the area of Historiographic Sciences and Techniques.

The composition of the research projects and research groups shows a contradiction in the policy of the centres, because the dynamic of transversality shown by the researchers, tending to seek thematic groupings that enable coordinating researchers from different centres, is contradictory to the policies of the universities, which tend to reward projects and research groups in the same university. Thus, on the other hand, given the small size of most centres, viability seems difficult unless there is



movement towards large groups that do not take into account the specialisation in history medieval, or that, to the contrary, prefer very small groups.

In any case, the dynamic of the same researchers dedicating time and energies to participate in public calls by structuring projects, joining groups, research grants and promoting agreements, leads to results in obtaining financing with which to develop the research tasks and activities. The sum of the resources acquired in the period studied was €3,393,339.77, with €1,959,827.83 corresponding to projects and €1,433,511.94 to various types of aid. These amounts were distributed very differently across centres in function of their initiatives. On one hand, the bulk of the global figure leads to the question of whether an investment of that size has brought scientific and social reversibility, in other words, whether the research projects and activities (excavations, scientific meetings, etc.) were untenable without financial help and if this has generated palpable results, especially in the form of publications, which mean a significant advance in our knowledge of medieval history. On the other hand, the wide diversity of projects and activities financed by these amounts over the seven-year period mean an average of €484,762.81 per year to be shared among all the centres and initiatives, which links in to complaints from researchers about the little money available for their respective projects and initiatives. All together, this leaves room for reflection about how to achieve greater efficiency from the investment in research.

Table 8. Resources obtained

	Research projects and finance for research groups	Complementary actions, grants and agreements	Total centres
UB	€705,135.52	€392.464,87	€1,097,600.39
UAB	€152,960.00	€137,081.00	€290,041.00
CSIC	€379,006.00	€85,831.08	€464,837.08
UdL	€480,021.20	€603,807.59	€1,084,828.79
UdG	€181,220.00	€0.00	€181,220.00
URV	€61,485.11	€145,324.64	€206,809.75
UPF	€ 0.00	€ 69,002.76	€ 69,002.76
TOTAL	€1,959,827.83	€1,433,511.94	€3,393,339.77



1.5 Doctorates and masters

The small size of most universities and the changes in the study plans that were applied during the period studied affected the system of training new researchers. Nowhere were there specific doctorate and master's courses leading to a doctorate in medieval history on offer, although both the UB and the UAB drew up combinations with neighbouring chronological periods. In the former, until 2005, there was a common doctorate course, *Medieval and Modern world: Recent lines of Research*, shared with Modern History and in the latter, there were three successive doctorate programmes: *Archaeology and Ancient and Medieval History* (2002-2005); *Archaeology, Ancient and Medieval History and Historiographic Sciences and Techniques* (2004-2006); *Research in Ancient and Medieval History* (2005-2008). The UB had the master's in Medieval Cultures, shared with the other areas of research into the medieval period, especially the philological ones, while from 2007, the UAB adopted the master's in Sciences of the Antiquity and the Middle Ages, as part of the programme Cultures in contact in the Mediterranean.

In the UdG, there was a doctorate programme in Humanities and Culture, that gave way to the master's in initiation in research in Humanities: History, Art, Philosophy, Language and Literature in the 2008-2009 course. With its 60 credits, this offered an itinerary of 30 credits on Culture and Society in the Medieval Epoch. In contrast, in the period studied, there was no specific training in the UPF, UdL or URV. However, in the latter, from 2003, there was a medieval presence in the master's in Classical Archaeology and, starting in 2004, in the master's in Mediterranean Cultural Studies. From 2009, the initiation in research in medieval history in that centre was orientated towards the 60-credit master's in Historical Societies and Political Forms in Europe, which included training in medieval history, although without its own specific itinerary.

This disparity in training shows no direct relation with the number of grant holders undergoing doctoral training, which was very high in one centre without a specific training plan (UdL) and in another which, given its research focus, lacked the capacity to draw up its own study plans (CSIC). Similarly, the most specialised training, offered by the UB and the UAB, corresponded to a very uneven number of grant holders.

The contribution of the Spanish ministry to financing doctoral grants stands out -30.76% of the total, higher in the case of the CSIC because its legal framework impedes it from participating in the calls from the autonomous government (*Generalitat de Catalunya*). However, the latter, carried the greatest weight with 46.75% of the total. Four of the universities awarded doctoral grants (17.95% of the total), with a third of these from the UB and the UdG. Moreover, both the CSIC and the UdG managed to add doctoral grants from foundations and specific agreements.



Table 9. Financing of doctoral grants

	Autonomous Government (Generalitat)	Ministry of the Spanish Government	The own research centre	Foundations and Agreements
UB	4	4	4	0
UAB	1	2	1	0
CSIC	0	4	1	1
UdL	12	1	0	0
UdG	1	0	1	1
URV	0	1	0	0
UPF	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	18	12	7	2

The capacity to channel specific and qualitative research training in medieval history in the context of the new teaching framework that was just coming into effect at the end of the period analysed, was a challenge that will undoubtedly continue to condition the viability and quality of the research in the future.

1.6 Specialised journals

The research journals, in the current competitive context, are an indicator of quality through their function of attracting researchers from other centres who choose this means to spread their research. Various Catalan scientific journals channel research into the medieval period, which is published in the respective journal, together with texts about other historical periods. In a much more specific way, two research centres have dedicated journals on Medieval History: *Acta Historica et Archaeologica Mediaevalia*, linked to the UB since 1980, and *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* from the CSIC, which has been running since 1964. While the latter adapted to the new indicators of quality, becoming an international reference in the period studied, the former continued without incorporating the indicators currently required by the agencies for the evaluation of the quality of scientific journals. In 2007, in this new framework, the UdL added *Imago Temporis Medium Aevum*, a new journal specialised in medieval research.



Table 10. Journals

	Acta historica et Archaeologica Mediaevalia	Anuario de Estudios Medievales	Imago Temporis Medium Aevum (2007-09)
Internacional diffusion (DICE)	4.5	35.25	1.5
% Internationalisation of contributions (DICE)	17.86	18.6	48.72
Open to external authors (DICE)	NO	YES	YES
External evaluation	NO	YES	YES
LATINDEX	16	33	33
ERIH	-	INT2	W
ANEP	-	A	A
CNEAI	-	16	15
ANECA	-	19	18
CARHUS	C	A	C
Quartile (In-Resh)	4 th	1 st	4 th
Experts Opinion (Resh)	-	5.7	0.68
Databases	6	11	11

2. Scientific production

2.1 Strong research lines

The so-called crisis of history, that led to the publication of explicit reflections all over the world in the last decade of the 20th century, coincided in Catalonia with the end of decades in which the activity of the historian had felt challenged by demands for social and identity revision and that, one way or another, could influence the hermeneutics applied to the heuristics. Thus, not by establishing a rupture with the earlier phases, but rather by showing that it had assimilated contributions from earlier stages, in the first decade of the 21st century, research into medieval history



could move on to seek new lines. In the period analysed, medieval history research catalysed an important revision, with methods very attentive to the sources and work concerned with renewing the central axes. This change is exemplified by the fact that the explicative approaches in the medieval history part of the 'Història de Catalunya', directed by Albert Balcells published in 2004, and with numerous later reeditions, are very different from those in all earlier general histories.⁷

On one hand, the adoption of 'power' as a leading vector enabled political history to be resumed, steeped in social history and reconsidering the institutional structures of the Crown of Aragon and specifically Catalonia, while being able to revise not only the structure of government but also how the different social groups fitted together and how the determining discourses of political justification were managed. The relation between vigorous urban societies and a jurisdictionally fragmented surrounding under a weak monarchy imposed a specific institutional and social design. The binding agreements between cities and towns (*carreratge*), the popular militia (*sometent*), the actions of the jurisdictional officials, the behaviour of the estates in the courts, the role and actions of the Church in its diversity, the articulation of the 'land' in the permanent Diputation of the Courts (*General*), the weight demanded by the country's capital, the narrative and scenography of royal power, the currency in the game of power, etc., are some of the pieces that were fitted into a new perspective that gave more value to an institutional and social architecture based on the concordance of all the pressure groups, according to the late medieval political, social and economic vigour.

This approach found different points of intersection with the prolongation of the notable task carried out in the previous decade by the historians concentrating on the study of royal finances, especially how these fit in with the municipal administration, a work that opened an enriching window for the analysis of the role of public debt in institutional, social and economic relations, and towards the revision of its impact on urban society, both for the tax burden and its distribution, and for the ramifications in the relations between urban nuclei and the rural surroundings.

This is where it links with specific studies on a late medieval rural society affected by the relation with the towns, the jurisdictional fracture and evolution of feudal domains with the taxation and social consequences. It was possible to review important issues, from land ownership to the resizing of the true meaning of the so-called bad uses (*mals usos*), especially, the *remença*.

The relation between society and power led to the revision of another central point, the economic, from attending to the same social experience, whether by knowing the interior of the bourgeois home, the routes followed by goods, the analysis of maritime transport and the road network, exploitation of natural and artisan resources, slaves routes, the land market, or the amount of credit, as well as analysing the behaviour of all aspects of families on different levels of the social

7. Sabaté, Flocel. "Catalunya Medieval", *Història de Catalunya*, Albert Balcells, ed. Barcelona: L'Esfera dels Llibres, 2004: 101-334.



strata. The sum of these lines allowed a more accurate and coordinated view of what really happened in the epoch studied, which encouraged measuring, reviewing and resituating old common elements, such as the supposed long late-medieval crisis.

The combination of political, military, social and economic vectors in the Late Middle Ages refers to the revision of the external projection of Catalonia, revising its relations with the other kingdoms on the Peninsula or, even more so, looking outward across the Mediterranean, either towards the trade with the East, the area of Italy or the western sectors. Thus, better knowledge was acquired about the mechanisms of influence on Sicily and even more so, on Sardinia, renewing our knowledge about the relations with North Africa and, notably, with Granada, which then led to reflections about the interests at stake in the dealings, economic and social, with ideological otherness in the context of a common Mediterranean.

The introduction of new social vectors enabled approaches initiated in previous decades to continue to be fruitful, with the revision of the cultural and social function of food in the different social groups, or the wide range of gender studies seeking to capture the many aspects relating to women. The desire to reunite people with the reasons for their behaviour opened innovative ways to access the axiology and beliefs, including the search through the private libraries of the Barcelonan bourgeoisie, to a revision of spirituality, female mysticism and the role of writing. It is a question of defining the elements around which society, in its different social groups, unifies its own identity, generates a memory and justifies it through a specific ideology. In that sense, the consolidation of society under a confident and excluding Christianity draws attention towards the inassimilable minorities, namely, Jews and Muslims. The mutual encounter—or the mutual disagreement—was also studied during the expansive collision, especially in the 12th and 13th centuries.

The study of the society through its shortcomings led to the analysis of aspects linked to breaches of rules, the breakdown of social order, the definition of evil that must be punished (heresy, sorcery, delinquency, criminality...) and the actions of the justice, as well as society's behaviour towards adversity, either natural calamities or shortages and famine. Progress continued in this latter aspect about the problems of supplying the towns and cities, while also stretching the chronological range towards the central centuries of the Middle Ages. In all cases, the aim was to measure the effects on the economy and, notably, the response of society to the difficulties, thus enabling comparisons between the different social groups and the exercise of their inherent power.

The attention given to the central centuries of the Middle Ages supplied new points of analysis about the evolution social, attentive to revising the property market, land tenure, the establishment of links of dependence, the levies charged or the progressive territorial articulation on all its different levels and contents. This is the way that finalised revisions that had already been announced in the previous decade, while relating the family structures, the seigniories, the function of the town's markets and the generation of justificatory values, with the help of the Church, the claim for royal consolidation, the assumption by the nobility and receptivity among the peasantry. The bourgeoisie that emerged as a new specific



group during these same central centuries demanded their social place was analysed in new societies, such as Tarragona, Tortosa or Lleida, helping to better understanding the urban societies starting. The religious orders that expanded in this context, like the Cistercians, the military orders or the Premonstratensian canons, enjoyed a specific perspective in this analytical framework.

When asking about the values that united the society in the central centuries, a deeper insight is required into the interpretation of violence, understood as an element of the system, revising the contents of such concepts as war and peace and how they fit into the evolution of feudalism. This conceptual revision also facilitated a better understanding of the political workings, including the relation with the Occitan and Provençal surroundings.

The revision of the Early Middle Ages has delved into the importance of writing and its function. Moreover, a more balanced view between the different counties, as well as the evolution of the frontier, was also achieved. Thus, in itself this developed a whole new explicative vector. It was a frontier with two sides to consider, which reached new perspectives through studying the Andalusian areas, using a methodological renewal, while hoping to obtain new answers from the amalgamation of varied and scattered sources.

The legal, social and political perspective attempted to renew research into the Carolingian period, raising questions about beliefs and the public notion, as well as the projection over the territory in all its aspects. The Hispanic comparative of this early-medieval society and the Visigoth roots were also subjected to careful review through the profiling and analysis of royal power, the structure of the aristocracy, the role of the Church and the existence of dissidence in a religious form.

Half the consolidated research groups in 2009 made allusion to the physical space: two define themselves as groups of 'archaeology', another including the word 'space' in its name and the last invoked 'medieval territory'. From very different outlooks, space, territory and landscape have become the subject of study, affecting the full chronological range and with very different results. The territory must be seen as a mirror on the society and thus, to show its institutional structure or reflect the disputes that take place in it, space offers a political and social portrait, either in its urban (even domestic) interior or in a progressively anthropomorphised rural landscape.

The issues inherent in the sources impose prudence on some archaeological deductions, especially when the territory or the landscape is analysed around chronologically distant realities and which are insufficiently proven due to the same heuristic difficulties. In other cases, the archaeological work should be aimed at going beyond descriptive studies towards solid contributions. Progress was also made in the comparative perspective, clearly shown in the work by the consolidated research groups in medieval archaeology, acting in one case in Yemen and another in the north of Castile and the Basque Country, with the corresponding bibliographic contributions.

One way or another, archaeology showed its vitality among Catalan medieval research, as also shown by the appearance of a specific series of books in the UdL.



Correspondingly, there were proposals for a methodological or conceptual renewal. A research group passed along a specific interpretive framework from the study of the role of water in agriculture and, from there, to a social, economic and political structure of the Muslim society, towards a more comprehensive agrarian archaeology. There were studies into archaeology from other fields that, especially through systematic prospection, opened paths with which to penetrate into the least known parts of Andalusian society, seeking alliances with tools like toponymy and reviewing territories that had previously drawn little attention (dry-land areas, frontiers, etc.) and reinterpreting the territorialisation from such aspects as defence, which again, demands prudence in the deductions.

These approaches to Islamic society, and especially the Andalusian, are complemented with those done from the study of coinage, with all it signifies, not only economically, but also fiscally, socially, politically and institutionally. In a very different way, Islamic society was also studied from the foundations and discourses of power in periods like the Omeya, or from a penetration into the thought to catch the values and axes of identity in such aspects as gender and otherness.

In all cases, the research was enriched by the ongoing supply of sources, usually added from variable and chance ways, a task that became an intersection between historians, palaeographers and local scholars, all highly profitable through increasing the sources in circulation. A specific task of the research and study of private archives was added, while many of the archives open to the public improved access to unpublished sources, thanks to the computerisation that also enabled access to the sources through Internet.

2.2 *Doctoral thesis*

During the period studied, twenty-eight doctoral thesis were defended, 71.42% of which were defended in the UB. Three of these PhD students were from abroad and completed their training in the UB. All these PhD were directed by 14 supervisors (an average of two theses for each supervisor), which indicates a certain concentration in the leadership of research, also regarding training. Two thirds of these theses were about the late medieval period, and the rest on the central or early Middle Ages. They innovated in very varied aspects, although we can highlight the study of the territory as a mirror on society in the different periods (the transition from the classical world, the Andalusian society, the county landscape, the transformations with the conquests of the 12th and 13th centuries or the structure of the late-medieval rural society), linking to the workings of the market, craftwork production and distribution, trade routes and supply of the late-medieval city, with all their implications for urban government and social behaviour. The concern for the identity of late-medieval society clarified aspects like religiosity in female expressiveness or the bourgeois experiential axes, facilitating the revision of urban growth, either in the relations of power expressed in the settings like the courts, or in the imposition over the rural surroundings in such aspects as the



remença. Except for very specific cases, the research focussed on the Catalan case. Formally, all seem to have had the same value, as they received the highest rating, four of them with honours.

With the progressive reform of education, the doctoral thesis is fitted into a very specific calendar. The reality, however, appears different: most theses are defended at dates much later than that of the ending of the doctoral grant. Of the 25 doctoral grants finalised in this period, only eight (30.76%) led to the defence of the doctoral thesis the following year. In the majority of cases in the period studied, the PhD Dissertation was done by students who let several years pass between the end of the doctoral grant and the defence of the thesis. The condition of doctoral grant holder appears as the habitual path: only 11.53% of those who earned a doctorate did so without having previously enjoyed a doctoral grant.

The doctoral thesis does not conclude with the end of the period of the doctoral grant because of the difficulty of fitting the research into a rigid and regular model of 'cursus honorum' in university education, in which the pre-doctoral phase is immediately followed by the defence of the thesis and the move to postdoctoral posts. However, the most worrying are the cases in which enjoying a grant does not culminate in the defence and approval of the respective doctoral theses, in that it leads to fears of a waste of the investment in training and a failure of the training process itself.

Table 11. Grants and doctoral theses

	Doctoral grants finalised (2003-09)	PhD Thesis defended
UB	8	20
UAB	1	3
CSIC	3	(defended in the UB)
UdL	10	2
UdG	3	2
URV	0	1
UPF	0	0
TOTAL	25	28



2.3 Publications. Bibliometry

During the period studied, the Catalan medievalists published 1,249 pieces. 55.8% of these works were in the form of chapters in books and 31.46% as articles. The high volume of small-scale publications through chapters in books or articles concords with the contemporary directives in research and is coherent with the research projects. However, the places chosen for scientific diffusion are usually closed and generally distant from leading publications. Thus, a gap is generated between the quality achieved in the research and the ways of diffusion, which are mainly closed and rarely abroad.

The books reflect the same scientific dynamic, with a high presence of compilations and compendiums beside works that culminate fully complete research.

Table 12. Bibliometry

UB					
	Total	Percentage			
Books	25	5.43%	3	12%	Same institution
			21	84%	Spain
			1	4%	Abroad
Books, editor	27	5.86%	6	22,22%	Same institution
			16	59.25%	Spain
			5	18.51%	Abroad
Chapters in books	234	50.86%	13	5.55%	Same institution
			185	79.05%	Spain
			36	15.38%	Abroad
Articles	174	37.82%	17	9.77%	Local
			142	81.6%	Spain
			15	8.62%	Abroad
Total	460	100%			



CSIC					
	Total	Percentage			
Books	10	4.01 %	4	40%	Same institution
			5	50%	Spain
			1	10%	Abroad
Books, editor	12	4.81 %	4	33.33%	Same institution
			5	41,66%	Spain
			3	25%	Abroad
Chapters in books	158	63.45%	12	7.59%	Same institution
			117	74.05%	Spain
			29	18.35%	Abroad
Articles	69	27.71 %	15	21.73%	Local
			48	69.56%	Spain
			6	8.69%	Abroad
Total	249	100%			

UAB					
	Total	Percentage			
Books	21	12.5%	1	4.76%	Same institution
			19	90.47%	Spain
			1	4.76%	Abroad
Books, editor	8	4.76%	2	25%	Same institution
			5	62.5%	Spain
			1	12.5%	Abroad
Chapters in books	93	55.35%	4	4.30%	Same institution
			74	79.56%	Spain
			15	16.12%	Abroad



Articles	46	27.38%	15	32.60%	Local
			27	58.69%	Spain
			4	8.69%	Abroad
Total	168	100%			

UdL					
	Total Total	Percentage			
Books	18	8.03%	4	22.22%	Same institution
			14	77.78%	Spain
			0	0%	Abroad
Books, editor	20	8.93%	2	10%	Same institution
			18	90%	Spain
			0	0%	Abroad
Chapters in books	140	62.5%	3	2.14%	Same institution
			127	90.71%	Spain
			10	7.14%	Abroad
Articles	46	20.53%	11	23.91%	Local
			29	63.04%	Spain
			6	13.04	Abroad
Total	224	100%			

UdG					
	Total	Percentage			
Books	8	12,12%	1	12,5%	Same institution
			7	87,5%	Spain
			0	0%	Abroad
Books, editor	1	1,51%	0	0%	Same institution
			1	100%	Spain
			0	0%	Abroad



Chapters in books	27	40,90%	4	14,81%	Same institution
			16	59,25%	Spain
			7	25,92%	Abroad
Articles	30	45,45%	23	76,66%	Local
			7	23,33%	Spain
			0	0%	Abroad
Total	66	100%			

URV					
	Total	Percentage			
Books	2	5.40%	0	0%	Same institution
			2	100%	Spain
			0	0%	Abroad
Books, editor	4	10.81%	0	0%	Same institution
			4	100%	Spain
			0	0%	Abroad
Chapters in books	18	48.64%	0	0%	Same institution
			15	83.33%	Spain
			3	16.66%	Abroad
Articles	13	35.13%	3	23.07%	Local
			10	76.92%	Spain
			0	0%	Abroad
Total	37	100%			

UPF					
	Total	Percentage			
Books	3	6.66%	0	0%	Same institution
			3	100%	Spain
			0	0%	Abroad



Books, editor	0	0%	0	0%	Same institution
			0	0%	Spain
			0	0%	Abroad
Chapters in books	27	60%	1	3.70%	Same institution
			24	88.88%	Spain
			2	7.40%	Abroad
Articles	15	33.33%	1	6.66%	Local
			11	73.33%	Spain
			3	20%	Abroad
Total	45	100%			

Table 13. Publications from all the research centres in Catalonia

	Total	Percentage			
Books	87	6.96%	13	14.94%	Same institution
			71	81.60%	Spain
			3	3.21%	Abroad
Books, editor	72	5.76%	14	19.44%	Same institution
			49	68.05%	Spain
			9	10.50%	Abroad
Chapters in books	697	55.80%	37	5.30%	Same institution
			558	80.05%	Spain
			102	14.65%	Abroad
Articles	393	31.46%	85	21.62%	Local
			274	69.72%	Spain
			34	8.65%	Abroad
Total	1249	100%			



2.4 International projection of the research

The Catalan medievalists participate in the research in the international points of reference: 77.42% of the consolidated researchers (CU, TU and aggregates) participated actively in congresses or scientific seminars abroad during the period studied, and a fifth of them (20.30%) had spent longer than a month in foreign research centres (see table 14).

Moreover, the 'cursus honorum' incorporated a postdoctoral stay abroad. In the period analysed, five researchers won post-doctoral places in foreign universities, two of these were from the UAB, two from the UdL and one from the UB. In three cases, this was financed by the Spanish ministry, in one, by the mobility programmes of the autonomous government of Catalonia (*Generalitat*) and the last, thanks to European financing (Marie Curie programme). In line with their research and in coherence with the Catalan medievalist tradition, three chose French universities, and the other two went to Italian centres. Significantly, on finishing their two-year stays, two returned to the university of origin (UAB, UdL), two found posts in other Catalan universities (UdL) and one remained in the same foreign research centre. The ability to recover the researchers trained abroad is a clear benefit for the Catalan university system, for both the training received and the contacts made. However, although four of the five who went abroad during the period under study returned (and the other one is still in the research system although in another country), in all cases, they are on temporary contracts with the consequent uncertainty about the future.

These strategies enabled the links between national and foreign researchers to be reinforced. In fact, the close relation is seen in many ways. One is the existence of outstanding foreign researchers whose research is focussed on the Catalan theme, often maintaining a permanent relation with Catalan medieval research. In the period analysed, a long list of authors made important contributions. These included Thomas N. Bisson, Jeffrey A. Bowman, Damien Coulon, Paul Freedman, Christian Guilleré, Adam Kosto, Damian Smith and Michel Zimmermann.

This mutual relationship is shown by the fact that the lines of research of Catalan medievalists harmonised well with the central axes of the international research. However, the subjects of this research focus on the home territory, and only rarely made comparative studies with other areas. Nevertheless, the scientific production of Catalan medieval research tended to be well represented in the international indexations. A large part of the research by Catalan authors was in recognised databases like *Medioevo Latino*, *Regesta Imperii* and especially the *International Medieval Bibliography*, with this latter benefiting from a specific agreement between the CSIC and the Institute for Medieval Studies at the University of Leeds through editing the *Repertorio del Medievalismo Hispánico*.

The transmission of the research directly to international forums, through foreign publications was a little used resource: Catalan medievalists only published abroad 3.21% of the books, 10.5% of the scientific direction of books, 14.65% of the chapters in books and 6.65% of the articles. Even more rarely used



are languages with greater scientific weight. 57% of the publications used the language of the country (Catalan), followed by 31.95% in the official language of Spain (Spanish). In contrast, only a marginal 3.60% were published in English, the language that has imposed itself as an international scientific *lingua franca*. French, the language traditionally of reference in medievalist training in earlier decades, was somewhat more widely used, although still marginally: in 4.72% of the publications. The other natural area of reference for traditional Catalan medieval research, Italy, only generated 2.4% of publications in that language. It is evident that the writers were overwhelmingly addressing a Catalan, or at the most, Hispanic scenario.

The contradiction was also very clear, as mentioned above, in the research projects: a notable presence of projects that required international partners—four projects in the UdL, two in the UAB, one in the URV and one in the CSIC—contrasted with the scant participation in European projects, with only two projects led from Catalonia (UAB, UdL).

To sum up, more than a lack of internationalisation, there was a dysfunction, because milestones achieved in some fields clashed with shortcomings in others: the researchers participated in international congresses and seminars, some of them making study trips and stays in leading research centres and with international contacts that, nevertheless, contrasted with the real lack of presence in international scientific publications.

Table 14. Participation in international activities

	Active participation in congresses and seminars abroad*		Research stays of longer than one month in foreign research centres*	
	Total	Percentage by researcher	Total	Percentage by researcher
UB	51	4.63	2	0.18
CSIC	23	4.60	1	0.20
UAB	21	3.81	2	0.36
UdL	58	19.33	7	2.33
UdG	12	6	2	1
URV	3	0.75	0	0
UPF	2	2	0	0

* CU, TU AND AGREGATS



Table 15. Languages used in the publications

	Catalan	Castilian	English	French	Italian	German
UB	229	184	18	19	15	4
UAB	91	68	11	5	5	0
CSIC	134	86	11	11	8	0
UdL	174	31	3	16	2	0
UdG	35	4	0	5	0	0
URV	22	15	2	0	0	0
UPF	27	11	0	3	0	0
Total	712	399	45	59	30	4
Percentage	57.01 %	31.95%	3.60%	4.72%	2.40%	0.32%

2.5 Professionalisation and social projection of the research

The regulated research system requires complete professionalisation and even a very rigid *cursus honorum*. However, there are four fields that lead to both the transfer of contents and an intersection of objectives: the initiatives of the local and district study centres that are so deeply rooted in the Catalan social fabric; the initiatives by local, district, provincial or regional entities that resort to historical references to organise social and civic acts of commemoration; the promotional activities of cultural institutions like museums and archives; and even commercial initiatives run by publishers, for both books and periodical publications.

In some case, this intersection worked in benefit of the research, and in others, it focused in the transfer of contents. Thus, initiatives outside the framework of research itself facilitated the organisation of scientific meetings that combined the diffusion and transfer of contents on one hand with the scientific benefit on the other, while showing that the combination of initiatives of varied origins could generate benefits for both sides, in other words, for diffusion and for research. In other cases, the direct intervention of the researcher was seen as a transfer of contents, either through public talks or publications outwith the scientific media. 33.92% of researchers published in local or district journals or in magazines with historical and cultural contents. Around a third of researchers participated in popular publications, with a variable intensity that in one case became a notable preferential option. Moreover, the social function of medieval history also facilitated a relatively reiterated presence of researchers in the media either the press, radio or television, which in some cases became very habitual.



This participation in various levels of contact enables the outlook of the researchers towards divulgation to be shown. It can be argued that the transfer of contents became a coherent target with the regular link of professional historian as a civil servant, sustained by public funds, it thus being coherent that this should lead to a transfer of contents. Moreover, the fact that two thirds of the researchers did not participate in this kind of publications is related with the prudence that the work of the researchers requires. Certainly, the high specialisation of each of the duties the researchers are involved in —research, teaching and, in some cases, management—, with their regulated demands, hinders the addition of a fourth duty, so that an increase in transfer of contents can be in detriment of the research itself. Thus, it is worth establishing different frameworks of collaboration that facilitate contact, assessment, circulation of publications, etc., thus combining the efforts of the various parties involved.

2.6 Congresses and seminars

In principle, conferences and seminars should become meeting points to catalyse research, and, as specialized meetings, the resulting publications should become reference works. However, the standardisation of research values decreases the valuation of publications from conferences, which could have influenced the unequal interest researchers have given to these meetings. In any case, Catalan researchers continued to believe that the scientific meetings generate a useful debate and, thus, worked to organise this type of meeting at different levels. Three types of gatherings prospered in the period studied: those stabilised annually; those organised by research groups in function of their activity and the ones that arose with commemorations.

In the first category, the stable meetings, must be highlighted. This was the case of the ones organised by the UdL in Balaguer, with the 7th to the 14th editions organised consecutively between 2003 and 2009, bringing together international specialists about 'Power in the Middle Ages', 'The Space of Evil', 'Balaguer 1105: Crossroads of Civilisations', 'Nature and development: the Environment and the Middle Ages', 'Utopias and alternatives of life in the Middle Ages', 'Ideas of Peace in the Middle Ages', 'Identities'. In 2005, a specific meeting on archaeology was added, and this became an annual event after the second edition in 2007, meeting in Algerri and Lleida and focussing on medieval archaeology in 'Reflections from the Practice' (2005), 'The Transformation of the Medieval Muslim frontier' (2007), 'The Prospection of the Territory' (2008) and 'The Dry-land Areas' (2009). All these meetings became regular and their minutes were later published. In another format, but also bringing together leading researchers favouring opening for reflection, the medievalists in the UdG organised seminars stretching all through the 2004-2005 academic year, and this continued annually, reaching the sixth edition in the 2009-2010 course.

Among their occasional meetings, the two consolidated research groups in the CSIC held a series of high-quality scientific meetings in line with their research: 'The Way of Saint James and Catalonia' (2003), 'The Catalan-Aragonese Crown and



its Mediterranean Surroundings in the Late Middle Ages' (2003), 'Negotiating in the Middle Ages' (2004), 'Public Indebtedness, Monarchy and Cities in the Hispanic Kingdoms (14th-16th centuries)' (2008); 'City and Hospital in Western Europe (13th-18th centuries)' (2009). Similarly, two research groups in the UAB organised meetings orientated around their respective lines of research: 'Lighthouses of Islam. Ancient Beacon Towers of al-Andalus' (2006) and 'For an Agrarian Archaeology. Perspectives of Research in Hispanic Medieval Societies' (2008). For its part, the UPF organised seminars summing the medieval and modern perspectives —'Public Notaries and Social History in Medieval and Modern Catalonia' (2003).

At the same time, the use the public administrations made of the commemorations invites caution about these claims, even more so when the scientific media sometimes responded with repetitive actions more than with innovative ideas. However, these civic demands can, at the same time, stimulate research. In this vein, we can highlight the commemoration of the birth of James I organised by the Institute of Catalan Studies in 2008, with a very wide range of events throughout the year, in sessions in Barcelona, Lleida and Girona, as well as the meetings further afield in Palma de Mallorca and Gandia.

3. Conclusions

During the period analysed, it can be considered that 14.28% of Catalan researchers in medieval history did not do research, but rather the management and transfer of knowledge. This figure rises to 21.87% if we restrict it to the consolidated teaching staff (CU, TU and *agregats*), bearing in mind that 57.14% of the latter percentage were in an age band of those nearing the end of their working life (aged over 60). The opposite side of these figures indicates however, that a very large proportion of the researchers' —85.72% of all levels of researchers and 78.13% of the consolidated ones— carried out true research, although at very different work rates, in other words, working creating and renewing knowledge.

This was the work of the medievalists distributed, in a very fragmented way, around seven research centres (CSIC, UB, UAB, UdL, UdG, URV and UPF), with the researchers themselves, for coherence in their work, establishing a network of connections by sharing research projects and consolidated research groups. There was no overall coordination or global research plan, although the sum of the various synergies offered a very coherent and complete whole, centred on the various fields and chronologies of the history of Catalonia, with a clear predominance of the Late Middle Ages. Except in the earliest medieval period, the researchers focused on their own country, with other geographies being tackled from the Catalan perspective. The lines of analysis adopted paths of renewal, with transversal vectors like space, territory, power, spirituality, writing, the ruptures of the social and natural order, etc. Through this focus, they contributed to a hermeneutic renewal with which to analyse a growing heuristic contribution, reaching a veritable —and necessary—



renovation of our knowledge of medieval Catalonia. This revision did not mean a rupture but appeared more as the fruit and evolution of the ways begun in earlier years, to the point that some vigorous lines of research showed an ascending path that continued innovations begun in the previous period through the study of taxation, food and diet, gender, mobility and relations in the Mediterranean, the exercise of jurisdiction, etc...

This renovation took the form of a rather large number of scientific products: 1249 titles. This was in line with the bibliometry that the regulation of research is currently submitted to. There was a dominance of chapters in books, a true reflection of a more traditional work in the Catalan Medieval research than the submission of articles to be evaluated and published that is imposed nowadays, and which is in second place. This format, coherent with the lines of evaluation that currently promote the publication of articles in prestigious journals more than in books, did however, bring with it a atomisation of scientific reflection, especially if this did not culminate, at some moment, in works of scientific recapitulation. By making an overall overview of the academic work, one could doubt if what is published is read and absorbed, and if it is processed to obtain a common historiographic discourse or whether, in contrast, each one focuses on registering the contributions produced in their own specific field of work. Publications under formats inviting a deeper reflection linked to analytical monographic studies would enable more conclusive results to be achieved, which would contribute to avoiding the fragmented vision and, at the same time, clarifying and offering new research clues to follow for an essential global understanding of the medieval history of Catalonia. The lack of reflections of that type does not show up the shortcomings of the researchers, but more the weakness of the scientific system that was being imposed.

The renewing work of many researchers shows the necessary fragility of the academic frontiers with other areas that also study the Middle Ages, be this from literature, art history or the history of philosophy, among others, as well as the transversalities added by palaeography or archaeology. Thus, another challenge is open, whose solution, through new bridges of collaboration, is linked to the stimuli for the future of the Medieval Ages research.

To promote their research, the majority of Catalan researchers chose means of diffusion and languages that denote a Hispanic projection, far from the international scientific circuits. However, this contrasts with the evident knowledge of the lines of international research and even notably with their participation in these through the active presence in congresses and international activities of 77.42% of the consolidated teaching staff.

Research enjoyed good health to judge from the contributions and dynamics of the work produced. That is why it draws the attention even more that this production was aimed especially at internal consumption, neglecting the presence in the international media despite the researchers being in contact, at the same time, with international research. The high volume of scientific production and the conceptual wealth of its contents were achieved despite the majority of research personnel having to combine their work with teaching and sometimes with



management. In fact, research was subordinate to teaching, insomuch as the staffs of the centres were designed in function of the latter and not for reasons of research. Moreover, there is the apparent paradox that there is no direct relation between a lower teaching load and greater scientific production. The model of stabilisation is currently changing, with a preference for contractual consolidation (*lector, agregat*) rather than the civil servant system. However, the unstable mobility in the lower levels of the teaching staff and the hesitant replacement of the upper levels produces uncertainty, to which we must also add the challenge of training a good reservoir of young medievalists through the new educational plans that were implanted in the final years of the period studied here.



II PART

THE PAST STUDIED AND MEASURED

CONSPIRING IN DREAMS: BETWEEN MISDEEDS AND SAVING ONE'S SOUL

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ABSTRACT

Thietmar of Merseburg was not an example of a virtuous, pious ecclesiastic; rather, he more closely exemplified an *Amtsbischof* and mentally anguished sinner. In the last book of his *Chronicle*, he narrates a dream in which he finds himself surrounded by a hostile crowd that incites him to consume a suspicious and peculiar drink: allegedly, it causes him to feel unpleasant sensations while performing his duties. Thietmar believes this apparition is the result of his sinful weakness. I will assess the role played by situations related to local conflicts in fomenting Thietmar's growing preoccupation with his salvation and the repercussions of his actions on his bishopric, pointing to Thietmar's concern about restoring the rights of the see and insuring that it was well-administered.

KEYWORDS

Thietmar, Chronicle, Bishop, Dream, Sinner.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Thietmar, Chronicon, Episcopus, Somnium, Peccator.

1. Introduction

Iste annus, quo hunc attitulavi librum, nativitatis meae¹ quadragesimus est I. vel paulo amplius; in mense vero / Aprili et V. Kal. Mai. decimus ordinationis meae introivit annus. Et pridie in suburbio Gnezni archiepiscopi illius aeclesia cum mansionibus caeteris comburitur. Et quia humana res omnis semper in dubio est, libet evomere antidotum illud periculosum, quod miser dudum absorui et nimis mihi hactenus id nocere persensi. In quadam curte mea Heslinge vocata nocte una cum requiescerem, per somnum vidi turbam astare magnam, tunc de apposita mihi testa aliquid manducare cogentem; et ego hos persentiens esse inimicos, primitus contempsit, ad ultimum vero in nomine Dei patris me istud percipere respondi. Quod cum eis multum displiceret et haec invisa congregatio id aliter fieri non posse videret, quasi gemens laudabat, quia me prorsus perdere conveniebat; et nisi tunc Dominicum nomen invocarem, sine perpetua salute manerem. Ex hac perceptione, ut mihi visum est, omnigenarum specie herbarum mixta, pessimarum varietates cogitationum sumpsi, quae, etsi me in divinis laudibus maxime turbent, tamen auxiliante Deo, quem hiis preposui, ad opus infaustum raro aut numquam me perduxerunt. Sufficit autem iniquae eorum voluntati, quod aliquam putant in me portionem habere. Sic enim alio tempore iterum me signatum eminus hii vallantes: 'Custodisti te', inquit, 'bene?' Et ego me ita sperare respondi; et subsequuntur: 'sed non sic erit in fine.' Illorum minas nec timeo nec blanditiis credo, quia haec cum auctoribus suis vanitas est; commissi quiantitatem mei admodum vereor.²

Cited above are the words Bishop Thietmar of Merseburg used to describe some of the torments he suffered in chapter 15 of his *Chronicle*, which I will return to after a brief profile of the author. Thietmar, who lived between 975 and 1018, was the

1. In fact, it is his 43rd year. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik*, ed. Werner Trillmich. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2011: 457 (footnote 47). This edition follows Robert Holtzmann's text. For quotations in Latin I am using the last bilingual Latin-German edition, published in 2011, which contains an appendix to the introduction by Steffen Patzold.

2. "The year in which I dedicated this book was the forty-first since my birth, or a little more; 27 April marked the beginning of the tenth year since my ordination (1018). On the day before, in a suburb of Gniezno, the church of the archbishops burned down, together with other buildings. Indeed, because the affairs of humankind are always so doubtful, I shall now bring up that dangerous remedy which I, a wretch, previously ingested. I sense that it has subsequently done me much harm. One night, when I was resting at an estate of mine, called Heeslingen, I dreamed that I saw a large crowd of people standing near by. They were urging me to ingest something from a crock which had been placed next to me. I initially refused, realizing that they were hostile. Finally, I replied that I would take it, but only in the name of God the Father. They were most displeased with this. When they saw that otherwise it would not be done, however, this hateful gathering agreed, though with much grumbling. It had been decided that I would be completely destroyed. If I had not then invoked the name of the Lord, any chance of eternal salvation would have been lost to me. From this drink, which seemed to be a mixture of different types of herbs, I began to conceive various evil thoughts. They especially disturb me during celebrations of the liturgy, but with the help of God, which I always invoke, they have rarely or never led me to evil deeds. Nevertheless, it satisfied the evil will of these people, if they believed themselves to possess some part of me. On another occasion, they surrounded me again, although at a distance, and said: 'Are you guarding yourself well?' I responded that I hoped so. They continued, saying: 'But it will not be so at the end!' I neither fear their threats, nor believe their flattery, since both are as empty as their authors. It is only in respect to my own misdeeds that I feel any great concern". Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VIII, 15. For quotations in English I am using the existing English translation of the chronicle, based on the edition by Robert Holtzmann and on indications by Werner Trillmich (Thietmar of Merseburg, *Ottoman Germany. The 'Chronicon' of Thietmar of Merseburg*, ed. and trans. David Warner. Manchester-New York: Manchester University Press, 2001: 371-372).



son of Sigfried, count of Walbeck, whose domain is in the present-day German state of Saxony-Anhalt.³ Educated in the prestigious cathedral chapter at Magdeburg,⁴

3. Thietmar's parents were Sigfried, Count of Walbeck, and Cunegunda, daughter of Count Henry I of Stade. They had six children: Henry, Frederick, Thietmar, Sigfried, Bruno and Oda. Three of them followed an ecclesiastical career: Thietmar was Bishop of Merseburg (1009-1018), Sigfried was a monk and abbot at Berge and bishop of Münster (1009-1022), and Bruno was a monk at Corvey, abbot at Berge and Nienburg and Bishop of Verden (1034-1049). For more detail, see: Thietmar of Merseburg, *Ottonian Germany...*: 49-52. The translator suggests literature on Thietmar's family history: Warner, David. "Introduction: Thietmar, Bishop and Chronicler", Thietmar of Merseburg, *Ottonian Germany. The Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg*, ed. and trans. David Warner. Manchester-New York: Manchester University Press, 2001: 49 (footnote 299).

4. Previously, while still a child, Thietmar was educated at the Quedlinburg Abbey and in the Berge Monastery —the latter also attended by his brothers, as I have just pointed out. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: IV, 16; Warner (Warner, David. "Thietmar of Merseburg: the Image of the Ottonian Bishop", *The Year 1000. Religious and social response to the turning of the first Millennium*, Michael Frassetto, ed. Houndmills: Palgrave, 2002: 97) defines Thietmar as a product of the Magdeburg cathedral school, which occupies a marginal place in Stephen Jaeger's vast study about such educational centres: Jaeger, Stephen. *The Envy of Angels. Cathedral Schools in Medieval Europe, 950-1200*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994. There, the author mentions the example of Magdeburg among other cathedral schools which became a place of training and preparation for service at court (secular and episcopal) in the context of their flourishing in the mid-tenth century. In fact, "A cathedral school education becomes virtually a requirement for higher office in the imperial church". Jaeger, Stephen. *The Envy of Angels...*: 47. On the other hand, Jaeger (Jaeger, Stephen, *The Origins of Courtliness – Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals – 939-1210*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), studies the relationship between bishops and courtliness within a system of education traced to Brun of Cologne, stating the "...direct connection between the royal court and the rise of these cathedral schools... The educational goal of the cathedral schools was no longer the training of clerics in pastoral duties but rather the training of talented young men, noblemen close to the king above all, for state administration. Here a humanistic education became an essential part of preparation for service to the empire; the curriculum was adapted to the requirements, both human and practical, of an office". Jaeger, Stephen. *The Origins of Courtliness...*: 4-5. The fact that in the Early Middle Ages royal courts were not fixed in a particular residence, but rather moved with the German King needs to be taken into consideration: The King and his changing, at times volatile, retinue of dukes, counts, bishops and archbishops were hosted by bishops and secular nobles when they did not stay in one of the royal palaces (*Pfalzen*), see: Jaeger, Stephen. *The Origins of Courtliness...*: 4-5. The role of the imperial chapel (*Hofkapelle*) in providing human resources for the office of bishop was studied by Josef Fleckenstein in his two volume classic work: Fleckenstein, Josef. *Die Hofkapelle der deutschen Könige. I. Teil, Grundlegung. Die karolingische Hofkapelle*. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1959; Fleckenstein, Josef. *Die Hofkapelle der deutschen Könige. II. Teil, Die Hofkapelle im Rahmen der ottonisch-salischen Reichskirche*. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1966; Stephen Jaeger summarises this tendency: "The natural tendency of court officers to emancipate themselves from direct service at court and to step into high positions in the kingdom had its counterpart in the chapel in the progression from chaplain to bishop. Service to the king in his court had been an avenue to a bishopric since late antiquity and this continued in Carolingian times. But the frequency of this route as well as its political importance increased dramatically under Otto the Great and his successors". Jaeger, Stephen. *The Origins of Courtliness...*: 21. Fleckenstein deals with the quantitative and qualitative changes in the *Hofkapelle* in his second volume, specifically: Fleckenstein, Josef. *Die Hofkapelle...*: 50-63. There he states that *Daß heißt, daß die Erweiterung der Hofkapelle im wesentlichen auf eine Stärkung des adligen Elementes, der Weltgeistlichkeit und der Kanoniker in ihr hinauslief. Mit ihrer Erweiterung ging sozusagen eine qualitative Steigerung Hand in Hand. Dem entspricht das Bild der Bischofsspromotionen aus den Reihen der Kapelläne* ("That means that the enlargement of the Hofkapelle essentially meant the strengthening of the noble element, the secular clergy and the canons. Along with its extension there was a simultaneous elevation of its quality. This is consistent with the image of the promotion of bishops who were chosen from among the chaplains"). Fleckenstein, Josef. *Die Hofkapelle...*: 52. In the same volume, the author studies the changes in and



he served as provost of Walbeck Abbey in 1002; two years later he became a priest and on April 24th, 1009 was named bishop of Merseburg, a suffragan diocese of Magdeburg—an Ottonian institution established to minister to the empire's eastern territories.⁵ Between 1012 and the year he died (1018) Thietmar wrote his famous *Chronicle* dedicated to the Saxon kings and his own bishopric. In it he narrates not only Ottonian deeds and significant events during their reigns;⁶ the bishop of Merseburg also notes autobiographic details,⁷ reflects on the appropriate role for himself and his colleagues, and recounts certain situations arising from disputes over power and possessions within the diocese. He includes comments on other prominent ecclesiastics and laymen as well.

relationship of the chapel with the imperial church: Fleckenstein, Josef. *Die Hofkapelle...*: 119-134. In addition, Finck von Finckenstein (Finck von Finckenstein, Albrecht Graf. *Bischof und Reich. Untersuchungen zum Integrationsprozeß des ottonisch-früh-salischen Reiches (919-1056)*. Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1989) explored the origin, career path and role of selected bishops and bishoprics in the functioning of the imperial system in the context of his study of the process of integration of the Reich in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

5. Magdeburg was created as a border-see from where efforts to Christianise the Slavs were launched. The following constitutes the basic literature on the bishopric: Beumann, Helmut. *Theutonium nova metropolis. Studien zur Geschichte des Erzbistums Magdeburg in ottonischer Zeit*. Köln-Weimar-Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2000; Puhle, Matthias, ed. *Otto der Grosse, Magdeburg und Europa, Band I – Essays*. Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 2001; Muelverstedt, George Adalbert von, ed. *Regesta archiepiscopatus Magdeburgensis. Sammlung von Auszügen aus Urkunden und Annalisten zur Geschichte des Erzstifts und Herzogthums Magdeburg. Erster Theil. Bis zum Tode des Erzbischofs Wichmann (1192)*. Magdeburg: Baensch, 1876; Israël, Friedrich, ed. *Urkundenbuch des Erzstifts Magdeburg. Teil 1 (937-1192)*. Magdeburg: Selbstverlag der Landesgeschichtlichen Forschungsstelle für die Provinz Sachsen und für Anhalt, 1937; Claude, Dietrich. *Geschichte des Erzbistums Magdeburg bis in das 12. Jahrhundert. Teil I. Die Geschichte der Erzbischöfe bis auf Ruotger (1124)*. Köln-Vienna: Böhlau, 1972; Kehr, Paul. *Das Erzbistum Magdeburg und die erste Organisation der christlichen Kirche in Polen*. Berlin: Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1920.

6. I dealt with the topic in an article where, focusing on the prologues of the books in Thietmar's *Chronicon*, the aim was to show how the author perceived the deeds of the Ottonian kings from the perspective of the interests of his own see: Neyra, Andrea Vanina. "Glorias y aflicciones del imperio ottoniano: la Crónica de Thietmar de Merseburg". *Revista electrónica anual: Actas y Comunicaciones del Instituto de Historia Antigua y Medieval*, 9 (2013): 1-12.

7. On Thietmar of Merseburg, see the following basic literature: Goetz, Werner. "Thietmar von Merseburg, Geschichtsschreiber (975 † 1018)", *Gestalten des Hochmittelalters. Personengeschichtliche Essays im allgemeinhistorischen Kontext*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1983: 70-83; Lippelt, Helmut. *Thietmar von Merseburg. Reichsbischof und Chronist*. Köln-Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1973; Seidel, J. Jürgen. "Thietmar Bischof von Merseburg (975-1018)". *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, Herzberg: Traugott Bautz, 1996: XI, 1212-1213; Seidel, J. Jürgen. "Thietmar Bischof von Merseburg (975-1018)". *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*. 13 October 2010, Verlag Traugott Bautz GmbH. 17 April 2015 <http://www.bbkl.de/lexikon/bbkl-artikel.php?art=.%2FTh%2Fthietmar_b_v_m.art>; *Die Chronik des Bischofs Thietmar von Merseburg und ihre Korveier Überarbeitung*, ed. Robert Holtzmann. Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1935: VII-XXVIII; Warner, David. "Thietmar of Merseburg...": 85-110; Warner, David. "Introduction: Thietmar, Bishop and Chronicler...": 1-64; Trillmich, Werner. "Einleitung", Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik*, ed. Werner Trillmich. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2011: IX-XXX; Patzold, Steffen. "Nachtrag". Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik*, ed. Werner Trillmich. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2011: XXXII-XLVIII; Leyser, Karl. J. "Three Historians", *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe. The Carolingian and Ottonian Centuries*, Timothy Reuter, ed. London-Rio Grande: The Hambledon Press, 1994: 19-28. While most of Leyser's pages are devoted to Nithard and Widukind of Corvey, the last two do contain some basic information about Thietmar, as well as a short description of his literary style.



2. Thietmar the sinner: somewhere between a *topos* and exaggeration

The point of departure for this paper was my desire to reflect on the autobiographical data and on the identity of the author of the *Chronicle* within the broader framework of a study of bishops and missionaries in general whose activity was devoted to Christianising Central and Eastern Europe. From this perspective the question now becomes what makes the autobiographical details Thietmar of Merseburg inserts in his *Chronicle* noteworthy and why does he do it in the first place. The bishop's autobiographical references as a whole, which have been exhaustively examined in a recent article which I will refer to below,⁸ are not my concern here. I will focus exclusively on analysing the textual and historical context of the dream⁹ cited above and sketching out a possible interpretation.

8. Goetz, Hans-Werner. "Die Chronik Thietmars von Merseburg als Ego-Dokument: ein Bischof mit gespaltenem Selbstverständnis", *Ego trouble. Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages*, Richard Corradini, Matthew Gillis, Rosamond McKitterick, Irene van Renswoude, eds. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010: 259-270. The article proposes to take into consideration the perspective of the 'Ego-Trouble' studies to analyse Thietmar on four levels: 1) as a chronicler, 2) in his family context, 3) as an undeserving/unworthy bishop, and 4) as a neurotic and dissatisfied individual.

9. Although I do not explore the complex question of the importance of dreams in Christianity here, it does play a role in the underlying basis for the subject matter covered. According to Jacques Le Goff, one of the consequences of the formation of Christian oneirology was their democratisation: ... *le christianisme crée en profondeur une situation favorable à l'extension du domaine significatif du rêve...étend la possibilité de l' onirocritique à tous les rêves. Tous les rêves sont significatifs. Cette généralisation correspond à la fois à la 'démocratisation' du rêve dont j' ai déjà parlé et à la croyance du christianisme en l'omniprésence de la volonté divine...: dans toutes les manifestations humaines et, notamment, celles qui semblent plus particulièrement en contact avec le surnaturel* ("The Christianity created a deep situation favourable to an important expansion of the dream (...) and expanded the possibility of an oneiric analysis of every dream. All the dreams have a signification. This generalisation corresponds to a democratization of the dreams, according I have stated, and a Christian belief in the omnipresence of the divine will (...) in every form of human expression and, especially, those which appear to be in closer contact with the supernatural essence"). Le Goff, Jacques. "L'imaginaire médiéval", *Un autre Moyen Âge*. Paris: Quarto Gallimard, 1999: 713-714. On the other hand, medieval beliefs regarding dreams and how to interpret them were influenced by classical culture: *Las creencias más comunes respecto al sueño aparecen ya establecidas en época clásica: entre los griegos y los romanos estaba difundida la idea de que lo visto en sueños era cierto y, por tanto, servía como medio de conocimiento de una realidad más allá del mundo o de contacto con los seres sobrenaturales. Para explicar este fenómeno acudían a que o bien el alma recibía el mensaje de la divinidad como destinataria pasiva, o bien el alma, libre de la atadura del cuerpo, se desplazaba y conocía una realidad superior. La información que se había obtenido durante el sueño debía tenerse presente no sólo en el ámbito individual sino que se proyectaba sobre el grupo, especialmente si el receptor desempeñaba un papel relevante dentro de su comunidad* ("The most common beliefs related to the dreams were established during the Classic epoch: among the Greeks and Romans, the idea that everything seen in dreams was true was extended and, consequently, it was a knowledge's way for a reality beyond the world or a contact system with supernatural beings. This was explained both, by considering that the soul was a passive receptor of the divine message and by considering that it, free from any attachment to the body, moved and go to know a superior reality. The information received during sleep should be kept present for the dreamer and shared with the social group, especially when the receptor had an important role into the community"). García-Monge, Isabel. "El sueño en la Edad Media cristiana: categorías y tópicos esenciales", *Medioevo utópico. Sueños, ideales y utopías en el imaginario medieval*, Martín Alvira, Jorge Díaz Ibáñez, coords. Madrid: Sílex, 2011: 17. In his study endeavoring to delineate the cultural view of dreaming in the Middle Ages, Steven Kruger underlines the need for caution when interpreting source material: "Dream theory and practical responses to dreams are not necessarily commensurate. Literary



It should be noted from the outset, however, that certain *topoi* stressing humility and indignity in words and images the chronicler employs to refer to himself are clearly exaggerated. By way of example,

Quam egreios procures in hac urbe vidi, quorum laudabilem vitam pro debito nec sum imitatus neque memoriam eorum post solutionem carnis assequutus! Heu me misero, qui tot tantisque immerito sum coniunctus in fraternitate, sed longe dissimilis existo in condigna conversacione! Ego in peccatis iam pene mortuus, ut spero, vivam in lucido conspectu Dei eorundem meritis refocilatus; quia, etsi in hoc seculo parum boni operatus sum, tamen defunctorum semper memor sum. Voluntas mea interdum bona est; sed quia eidem vires aptas suggerere non studeo, parum prodest. Semper me accuso, sed sicut debui reatum non solvo; sumque ideo in omnibus corrigibilis, quia me non converto ad eum, qui est super omnia laudabilis. Agnosce, lector, procerem, et videbis in me parvum homuntionem, maxilla deformem leva et latere eodem, quia hinc olim erupit semper turgescens fistula. Nasus in puericia fractus ridiculum de me facit. Idque totum nil questus essem, si interius aliquid splenderescerem. Nunc sum miser, nimis iracundus et ad meliora inflexibilis, invidus, subsannans alios ipse deridendus, nulli pro debito parcens, glutto et simulator, avarus ac detractor et, ut haec convicia merito illata concludam, peior seum, quam possit dici vel ullatenus estimari. Unicuique sit fas non solum muttire, quin pocius in aperto, quia peccator sum, dicere, et post correptionem fraternam congruit suppliciter orare. Multi a populo laudantur, nisi pauca res eis obstaret, quod inter optimos haberentur; et quia verum est, hominibus de perfectione iusta nimis deesse, quid prodest de inferioribus hiis tale quid promulgare? Omnis laus in fine canitur, et mortalis conversacio igne probatur.¹⁰

depictions of dreams, even when directly invoking theoretical material, also depend upon literary traditions and “real-life” experience. Historical and (auto)biographical accounts may be distorted in a variety of ways, their form shaped by literary *topoi*, their content determined by political, didactic, and religious motives”. Kruger, Steven F. *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1992.

10. “How excellent are the men I have seen in this city and yet, I have not imitated their praiseworthy lives as I ought to have, nor have I cultivated their memory following the dissolution of their flesh. Woe is me, a wretch joined in fraternity with so many, but with an existence so dissimilar to their worthy manner of life. Though almost dead in my sins, I hope to live again in the clear vision of God, revived by their merits. Even if I have done too little good in this world, I have always been mindful of the dead. Moreover, my intentions are good. But they have produced little because I have not troubled myself to devote sufficient force to them. I always accuse myself, but have not freed myself of guilt as I ought to have. Therefore, I require correction in all things because I have not directed myself to him who is praiseworthy above all. Acknowledge, O reader, the great Lord. In me, however, you will see a tiny little man whose jaw and left side of the face are deformed by an ulcer which erupted there and continues to swell. The nose, broken in childhood, gives me a laughable appearance. Of all of that I would regret nothing, if only my inner character were bright. Now, I am a wretch, too prone to anger and resistant to virtue, envious, derisive towards others though myself worthy of derision, granting forgiveness to none though obligated to do so. I am a glutton and a hypocrite, greedy and disparaging. And, to conclude, these well-deserved reproaches, I can say that I am much worse than one can possibly say or estimate in any way. It would be permissible for anyone not only to mutter but to openly announce that I am a sinner, and it would be appropriate for me to humbly ask for fraternal correction. Many are praised by the people and very little prevents them from being included among the best. But because it is true that complete perfection is impossible for mortal men, what use is there in speaking of those who are even more inferior? The praise of each will be sung at the end and the lives of mortals will be tested in the fire”. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...* IV, 75.



Furthermore, Thietmar incriminates himself for having committed grave sins such as simony¹¹ and nonfulfillment of penance¹² and, above all, for having profaned of the tomb of Willigis, a predecessor in the post of provost of the Walbeck family church. According to the bishop of Merseburg, this last sacrilegious deed, the likely cause of an illness and the recurring anxiety that followed him from that moment on, appears to have manifested itself in a dream in which the chronicler hears the former provost lamenting: *'Hic ego sum', inquit, 'Willigisus, qui culpa tui errans vagor'*.¹³

This exaggerated characterisation of the fate of the sinner recently led Hans-Werner Goetz to label Thietmar as neurotic in an article in which the dream I analyse here is cited to support the premise that the *Chronicle* is an *Ego-Dokument*.¹⁴ This could be interpreted as both an example of the exaggerated self-criticism already mentioned as appropriate for a Christian concerned about saving his soul. Indeed, regarding the chronicler's dreams Goetz states: *Die vielen Traumgeschichte dürfen in Thietmars Deutung gewiss als Folge eines schlechten Gewissens gedeutet werden*.¹⁵

Referring back to chapter fifteen of the eighth book with which this article began, we find a dream, a drink,¹⁶ the hostility of the crowd, and the adverse effects

11. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VI, 43-44.

12. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VI, 46.

13. "I am here", 'Willigis, forced by your sin to wander without rest'. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VI, 45.

14. Goetz, Hans-Werner. "Die Chronik Thietmars...": 259-270. The editors of the volume which includes this Goetz's contribution state from the very beginning the methodological perspective that guides the authors' studies: "We were not so much concerned with the definition of the individual in the Early Middle Ages, nor whether an author betrays genuine emotion, hints of private life, feelings or convictions. Rather, we have historicized the concept of the individual and sought, through an analysis of what they wrote, to uncover all the elements that contribute to the make-up of an individual... The notion of 'ego-trouble', furthermore, is used in this volume as a methodological tool to analyse the texts written by individuals in the past, whether ostensibly designed to tell us about the author, or constructed for a purpose other than revealing anything about the author him- or herself... Constructing an individual identity often led people to go down unexpected paths to achieve their own special balance between self-assertion, self-fashioning and the social and intellectual discipline within which they wrote". Corradini, Richard. "Foreword", *Ego trouble. Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages*, Richard Corradini, Matthew Gillis, Rosamond McKitterick, Irene van Renswoude, eds. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010: 8.

15. "The many dream stories in Thietmar's interpretation should certainly be interpreted as a consequence of a bad conscience". Goetz, Hans-Werner. "Die Chronik Thietmars...": 267-268.

16. On magical potions and superstitions, see the following basic (and classic) literature: Cardini, Franco. *Magia, brujería y superstición en el Occidente Medieval*. Barcelona: Península, 1999; Daxelmüller, Christoph. *Historia social de la magia*. Barcelona: Herder, 1997; Flint, Valerie I. J. *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991; Giordano, Oronzo. *Religiosidad popular en la Alta Edad Media*. Madrid: Gredos, 1983; Gurevich, Aaron. *Medieval popular culture, problems of belief and perception*. Paris-Cambridge (UK): Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme-Cambridge University Press, 1990; Harmening, Dieter. *Superstitio. Überlieferungs- und theoriegeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur kirchlich-theologischen Aberglaubensliteratur des Mittelalters*. Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 1979. Kieckhefer, Richard. *La magia en la Edad Media*. Barcelona: Crítica, 1992; Schmitt, Jean-Claude. *Historia de la superstición*. Barcelona: Crítica, 1992; Thomas, Keith. *Religion and the decline of magic*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997; Vogel, Cyrille. "Pratiques superstitieuses au début du XIe siècle d'après le Corrector sive medicus de Burchard, évêque de Worms (965-1025)", *Mélanges offerts à Edmond-René Labande*. Poitiers: Centre d'Études supérieures de civilisation médiévale, (IXe - XIIe siècles), 1974: 751-761.



(evil thoughts and irritation during liturgical celebrations) on the chronicler that followed. In the next chapter (sixteenth of the eighth book), the bishop attributes these phenomena to sinful weakness:

Et veraciter id scio, quod talis fantasia, quamvis corporaliter appareat, Per se hominibus non noceat. Sed cum peccando faciem divinam a nobis avertimus, Illorum vesanas manus nemini parcentes miseri incidimus; et ab hiis protinus absolvimur, cum aut ipsi convertimur vel ab electis Dei visitatione crebra foveamur. Si quis vero compos sui meditatur in lege Dei, non hic a talibus appetitur, sed potius timetur, non a se, sed ex eius, quem is diligit, sancta potestate; quia custos est Deus omnium semet ex toto corde semper amantium. Ego peccator et fragilitati meae per omnia conscius, quia summis consolationibus non innitor, quid mirum, si ab infimis quacior? Et haec idcirco dixi, ut tu, lector, mortalitate ac innata humanitate mihi consimilis in hoc consensu me graviter peccasse scias et amminiculis indeficientibus succurras. Heu mihi misero, qui in hoc seculo multos spiritualiter adiuvere debui / nec hiis prosum nec me tueri possum! Unde autem predicta temptatio mihi evenierit, fidelibus tuis auribus infundo. Multis hominibus a predictorum vexatione hostium laborantibus subvenire studui et propter hoc ad insidiandum mihi eosdem accendi vehementer, quiaamvis in malum proni sint semper. Spero autem in Deum omnipotentem, ut non ad consumendum me hiis tradat, sed post purgationem diram clementer eripiat.¹⁷

Apparitions pursue sinners. Thietmar is profoundly aware of his faults. Does this then constitute just one more element for characterising him as a ‘neurotic’ personality?

3. Textual and historical context of the dream

The chronicler’s humility and exaggerated self-blame have been correctly interpreted as the result of the Christian fear of endangering the salvation of the soul. However, in the specific case of the dream recounted at the beginning of this article,

17. “In truth, I know that such apparitions may not harm us on their own account, however corporeal they may appear. But when our sinning causes God to avert his face from us, we wretched mortals fall into their frenzied and merciless hands. We are immediately freed from them, however, if we mend our ways or if we benefit from the constant intercession of God’s chosen ones. Anyone who exhibits self-control and thinks on God’s law will not be sought out by them, but rather feared. Indeed, this fear is not inspired by such mortals themselves, but rather by the holy power of the one they love. God is the protector of all who love him with constancy and with all their heart. If I, a sinner well aware of my weakness in all things, do not build on such a secure foundation, is it any surprise that I am shaken by those vile beings? Dear reader, similar to me in your mortality and innate humanity, I have said these things that you may know how grievously I sinned by agreeing to their demand, and support me with unfailing aid. Woe is me, this miserable wretch who ought to render spiritual aid to so many of his fellow mortals, but can protect neither them nor himself! I shall now entrust to your faithful ears the source of the aforesaid temptation. I have tried to support many persons suffering from the persecution of the enemies mentioned above. By doing so, I have incited them to attack me even more, though, to be sure, they are always prone to evil. I hope that omnipotent God will not permit me to be consumed by them, but rather, following a dreadful purgation, mercifully rescue me”. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VIII, 16.



this preoccupation is not an abstract one. I will now analyse the textual framework in which the dream is placed in order to demonstrate the degree to which certain concrete situations arising out of local conflicts pertaining to the dream's historical context might have acted as factors increasing Thietmar's concern about both the salvation of his soul and the repercussions of his actions on his diocese.

In the two chapters following the author's recounting of the dream and reflecting on the apparitions,¹⁸ readers' attention is diverted to certain matters affecting the empire. In the nineteenth chapter of the eighth book, however, the narrative returns to the subject of the bishop's dream and the diocese of Merseburg when the chronicler narrates the attack carried out on his properties by the 'bastard Adalbert', about whom no further details are given:

*Eadem tempestate aeclesia mihi indigno commissa multum mea id exigente culpa sustinuit dampnum. Namque misericors et pociens Deus noluit amplius inultum relinqui, quod crebra sui castigatione nequivit prohiberi, percuciens eam in mansuetudine et non in furoris sui digna retributione; ministros utiles sibi haec perdidit et facinus meum cotidie ingemiscit. In predicto etenim mense dedecus magnum eidem ac mihi inlatum est ab ibrida Aethelberto, qui curtem meam invadere eamque frangere servili collectione presumpsit.*¹⁹

Thietmar then sets out to explain what provoked the attack,²⁰ which was purported to be a retroactive consequence of the dissolution of the diocese of Merseburg from

18. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VIII, 17-18.

19. "At the same time, the church, committed to me in spite of my unworthiness sustained much damage because of my guilt. For our patient and merciful God was no longer willing to leave unavenged that which his constant warnings had failed to prevent. He had previously treated our church with mildness and withheld his deservedly angry punishment. Now our church lost many useful servants and daily had cause to lament my misdeed. In the month of June, a great outrage was inflicted upon it –and me– by the bastard Adalbert, who dared to attack and destroy one of my estates with a servile mob". Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VIII, 19.

20. *Quod vero hos ad haec agenda inflammaverit, veraciter explicabo. Secundi Ottonis larga benignitas cunctis pleniter arridens quendam forestum inter Salam et Mildam fluvios et Siusili ac Plisni pagos iacentem nostrae concessit aecclēsaie, temporibus Gisileri antistitis et Gunterii marchionis. Post lugubrem vero nostrae sedis destructionem, regnante tunc tertio Ottone, Ekkihardus marchio forestum ad locum Sumeringi dictum acquisivit et cum eodem nostrum commutavit. Renovator autem nostrae tunc dignitatis rex Heinrichus cum maxima parte appertinentium, presentibus cunctis optimatibus suis et confratribus hiis Herimanno et Ekkihardo id defendere non valentibus, iudiciaria lege hunc restituit. Cumque hic in nostrae dominio aecclēsaie plus quam duodecim annos staret et hunc Hirimannus comes LX mansis redimere ex mea potestate nullatenus valuisset, visum est ei, ut eum sibi et confratri super duorum proprietatem burgwardorum, Rochelinti ac Titibutziem, imperatoriis vendicaret preceptis, sperans antiquiorem nostram confirmationem diu esse abolitam. Quod cum mihi is aperiret, id nil proficere sensit. Namque in Magadaburg et in presentia imperatoris nostri precepta utris/que ostenduntur et munera nostrimet in omnibus priora esse convincuntur. Tandem predictus comes presente suimet fratre ac id audiente haec fatur: 'Quidquid hactenus in hiis fecimus, non ob temeritatem aliquam, sed quam habuisse speravimus iusticiam. Nunc autem id omittamus' ("Now, I shall truthfully explain what provoked them to do this. In the times of Bishop Giseler and Margrave Gunther, the generous beneficence of Otto II, smiling broadly upon everyone, granted to our church a certain forest. It was situated between the rivers Saale and Mulde, and between the districts of Siusuli and Plisne. After the sad destruction of our diocese, during the reign of Otto III, Margrave Ekkehard [I] acquired another forest, in a place called Sömmering, and traded it for the one belonging to us. Afterwards, along with most of our property, this forest was returned to us by King Henry, the restorer of our office. This restitution was confirmed through a legal judgement, in the presence of all the king's*



981-1004.²¹ During the era of the fervently criticized bishop Giseler (971-981)²²—before being dissolved and Giseler named archbishop of Magdeburg (981-1004), the bishopric had been granted a forest by emperor Otto II, which was later exchanged for another belonging to the margrave Ekkehard I.²³ When the diocese was restored to Wigbert in 1004 during the reign of Henry II,²⁴ the forest formed part of the properties recovered, despite the efforts of its former owners (Ekkehard I and his inheritors, Herman and Ekkehard II) to retain it.²⁵ The conflict remained unresolved, with Ekkehard II constructing enclosures that were objected to by Thietmar who, on a visit to that area of his diocese, felt obliged to act: he cut the

leading men, and with the brothers Herman and Ekkehard II unable to support their claim. This forest had been in our church's possession for more than twelve years. And Margrave Herman had in no way succeeded in reacquiring it by offering me sixty manse of land. Nevertheless, he thought that he and his brother might still claim it by means of imperial diplomata relating to the possession of two burgwards, Rochlitz and Teitzig. He hoped that the old document which confirmed our rights had long been lost. When he showed me his documents, he realized that they would do him no good. For at Magdeburg, when our respective diplomata were presented before the emperor, it was clear that our church's claims took precedence, in every way. At last, in his brother's presence and hearing, the aforesaid margrave declared: 'Until now, whatever we have done regarding this matter has been undertaken because we hoped to have justice, and not out of recklessness. Now let us give it all up'). Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VIII, 20. As noted by David Warner, "...the two men had not renounced their claim, but rather signalled their intent to pursue it by feud". Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VIII, 20 (footnote 42). Regarding the ties between Otto III and Ekkehard and the general practice of bestowing offices and granting lands as benefices and gifts by the rulers, Timothy Reuter draws attention to our source: "Thietmar cites as a mark of special favour in which Ekkehard of Meißen was held by Otto III the fact that the emperor converted most of Ekkehard's benefices into *propietas*". Reuter, Timothy. *Germany in the Early Middle Ages 800-1056*. London-New York: Longman, 1998: 198.

21. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: III, 14.

22. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: II, 36-37. Furthermore, in the third book of his *Chronicle*, Thietmar characterises Giseler as a mercenary: *eiusdem non pastor sed mercenarius* ("not its pastor but rather a mercenary"). Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: III, 14.

23. The exchange was made between Ekkehard and Giseler of Magdeburg. Regarding the forest, the trade was possible thanks to the intervention of Erzbischof Giseler in the year 997: *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Die Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaiser (Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae) 2. Band 2. Teil, Die Urkunden Otto des III*, ed. Theodor von Sickel. Hannover: Hannsche Buchhandlung, 1893: 668-669.

24. *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Die Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaiser (Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae). Die Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaiser, 3. Band 2. Die Urkunden Otto Heinrichs II. und Arduins*, ed. Theodor von Sickel. Hannover: Hannsche Buchhandlung, 1900-1903: 78-82.

25. The brothers Hermann and Ekkehard II tried to regain it by presenting documentation related to their possessions and, after the prerogative to Merseburg was finally proved, they tried to recover it by means of a dispute: Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VIII, 20. On the Ekkehardiner family and their bonds with the Ottonian dynasty, see: Reuter, Timothy. *Germany...*: 192-195. They were in charge of the Meißen march between 895 and 1046. Reuter, Timothy. *Germany...*: 194. In addition, Gabriele Rupp (Rupp, Gabriele. *Die Ekkehardiner, Markgrafen von Meißen, und ihre Beziehungen zum Reich und zu den Piasten*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996), studied the rise of the Ekkehardiner family, which became a relevant factor in the networks of political power in Central Europe, and their relationships with the Piast dynasty from Poland. On the marches around the bishoprics of Merseburg and Meißen—important defensive and interactive frontiers facing the Slavic east—as well as the relationships between their authorities and the secular and ecclesiastical powers, see: Eldevik, John. *Episcopal Power and Ecclesiastical Reform in the German Empire. Tithes, Lordship, and Community, 950-1150*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2012: 230-242.



cords of the enclosures and forbid the alleged usurper the right to use the forest and withhold tithes corresponding to the church of Merseburg.²⁶ Ekkehard responded by sending his *milites* to harass Thietmar, who was defended by his guards, and by extending hostilities to include not only the latter's people, but also personages such as archbishop Gero and count Sigfried as well.²⁷ It is worth noting that the difficulties suffered by the author's colleagues —which should be understood as examples of the ill-treatment afflicting bishops 'in different parts of the world', are once again preceded by self-criticism: *Ego in flagitiis miser et in facultatibus pauper,*

26. *Non longe post Ekkihardus, iuuenis ac ideo immaturus, in burgwardo suimet Rochelenzi dicto arduas munitiones ad capiendas ibidem feras instinctu Budizlavi militis sui parat. Hoc ego postea comperiens pacienter tuli et, ne sic agere vellet, per internuncium meimet, fratrem eius, postulavi. Herimanno quoque fratri suo haec cito questus nil in hiis omnibus profeci; sicque stetit usque post pascha. Et quia tunc aeris serenitas et viae oportunitas conveniebant et in has episcopatus mei partes nunquam veni, placuit mihi illuc pergere hactenusque ignota diligenter inquirere. Mense Maio VI. Non. eiusdem ac VI. feria ad Chorun veni ibidemque populum confluentem confirmavi. Dehinc cum in ipso itinere predictum opus laqueis et retibus magnis firmatum viderem, obstipui ac, quid inde facerem, cogitavi. Tandem, quia haec instrumenta nullatenus mecum vehere potui, ex hiis partem incidi protinus iussi; rectoque itinere ad Rochelinzi tendens paucos illic confirmavi et decimationem iniuste mihi abstractam et forestum banno omnibus interdicens haec nostrae assignavi aecclesiae facte pace* ("Ekkehard was a young man and therefore immature. Shortly afterwards, at the instigation of his *miles* Budislav, he began to erect tall enclosures in his burgward, Rochlitz, for the purpose of capturing wild game. When subsequently informed of his actions, I accepted the news peacefully. Nevertheless, through my intermediary —namely his brother— I asked that he desist. Also, I immediately complained to his brother. In each case, I was completely unsuccessful, and so things stood until Easter had passed. Then, because both the weather and the condition of the roads were favourable, and because I had never visited that part of my diocese, I decided to go there and carefully investigate the situation, as yet unfamiliar to me. On 2 May, a Friday, I went to Kohren and confirmed the people who gathered there. Continuing my trip, I encountered the area, mentioned above, which had been fitted out with ropes and great nets. I was astonished and wondered what I should do. Finally, because I could not take the apparatus with me, I immediately ordered that part of it to be cut down. Afterwards, I went directly to Rochlitz. There I confirmed a few people and, under threat of the ban, forbade the withholding of my rightful tithes and use of the forest. I declared all of this to be property of our church, and made peace"). Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VIII, 21.

27. *Tunc redii ad curtem supramemoratam; ibidemque VII dies cum manerem, audiui, quod milites Ekkihardi meis minarentur sociis. Ibi tunc cancellarius pernoctavit mecum et a me haec comperiens bene respondit. Postea congregationes multae mihi ad nocendum a predictis satellitibus factae a nostris custodibus ad tempus bonum preoccupatae sunt. Interim nuncium meimet ad imperatorem Magontiam misi pacemque eius supplex pecii. Quam cum Ekkihardus ex sua parte promitteret et frater suus diu a me desideratus a Polonia veniens dextera manu sua pacifica promitteret, uterque hanc non bene servavit. Namque homines VI flagellati ac depilati cum edificiis turpiter mutilatis approbant, qualiter tanti seniores ab aliis precaveri debeant. Satellites eorum more solito in me non / modo exarsere, verum etiam aliis melioribus nocuere. Archiepiscopum etenim Geronem in Wirbini et Sifridum comitem in Nicici pecierunt et, in quantum eis placuit, abstulerunt.* ("Then I returned to my estate at Kohren where, after seven days, I heard that Ekkehard's *milites* were threatening my people. At that time, the chancellor happened to be spending the night with me. When I explained the situation to him, he responded favourably. On numerous occasions, those same warriors gathered together and tried to attack me, but our guards stopped them, in timely fashion. Meanwhile, I sent my representative to the emperor, at Mainz, and humbly sought his mediation. Now, on his own behalf, Ekkehard agreed to a truce; and his brother, whom I had long awaited, returned from Poland and offered his own hand in peace. Neither kept his word very well, however. Six flogged and shaved men, and as many devastated houses, prove how others must defend themselves against such lords. In their accustomed manner, their dependants not only raged against me, but also harmed other, better men. They attacked Archbishop Gero in Werben and Count Siegfried at Nischwitz, and took whatever they wished"). Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik...*: VIII, 22.



*quamvis in utroque eiusdem ordinis viros precellam cunctos, tamen contumeliam superius memoratam non solus pacior sine illis.*²⁸

Thietmar goes on to recount a number of unfortunate events that took place in dioceses throughout the region and kingdom.²⁹ Merseburg apparently suffered a series of disquieting occurrences —seven serves died after eating poisonous mushrooms, a star remained visible for fourteen days and nights, and three wolves did great damage to the population: the people of Turingia were terrified, while unspeakable tribulations descended upon them and spread throughout the world in accordance with the divine will.³⁰

4. In closing

Citing the dream when reflecting on Thietmar's consciousness of being both sinner and unworthy bishop, the historian Hans-Werner Goetz considers that

*Erneut zeigt sich in diesen Worten nicht nur die Realität von Träumen für den mittelalterlichen Menschen, sondern auch Thietmars Vorstellung. Seine Sünden kann er teuflischen Mächten anlasten, aber er bleibt doch dafür verantwortlich... Bei aller Toposhaftigkeit solcher Äußerungen führen diese doch zum Kern christlicher Anschauungen: Thietmar befürchtet die Gefährdung seines Seelenheils.*³¹

This preoccupation showed by the chronicler about his wrongdoing is comprehensible within the framework of the chronicler's Christian cultural environment:

*Seine Individualität aber fügt sich ein in ein christlich-mittelalterliches Verständnis seiner selbst; seine Identität ist in erster Linie selbstverständlich eine spezifisch mittelalterliche, religiöse Identität, seine Probleme sind religiöse Probleme... Thietmars Selbstzweifel haben viele Ursachen, aber sie entspringen der Angst (oder gar dem Bewusstsein?), versagt und damit das Seelenheil verwirkt zu haben: als Bischof, als Adliger, als Mensch und vielleicht sogar als Chronist.*³²

28. "In regard to my misdeeds, I am a wretch. In terms of my abilities, I am a pauper. In either case, however, I am far worse than all men of my order. Nevertheless, I have not been the only one to suffer the outrages noted above". Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik*...: VIII, 24.

29. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik*...: VIII, 24-28.

30. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik*...: VIII, 29-30.

31. "He shows again himself that there are not only the reality of dreams for the medieval people in these words but also Thietmar presentation. His sins, he blamed diabolical powers, but he remains responsible... in all the significance of such utterances perform this but the core of Christian beliefs: Thietmar fears the danger of his soul salvation". Goetz, Hans-Werner. "Die Chronik Thietmars...": 268.

32. "Nevertheless his individuality fits into a medieval Christian understanding of himself; his identity is primarily a matter of course, a specifically medieval, religious identity, his problems are religious problems ... Thietmar self-doubt have many causes, but they derive from the fear (or even the awareness?), fails



Clearly the Merseburg chronicler considers the dispute among his many misdeeds (as anticipated abstractly in the dream) that had severely prejudiced the well-being of his bishopric: in fact, cutting the cords of the enclosures culminated the series of events unleashing the most violent reaction. However, the dialogue engaged in between this dream and the next sequence of events narrated by the chronicler should not be overlooked. It is at this point that the tale of the trials and tribulation suffered by the diocese he led, Merseburg, and the empire as well begins. Prominent among events particularly alarming to the bishop is the dispute involving the forest ceded by Otto II.

Viewed in this light, above and beyond the autobiographical references emphasising the bishop's self-criticism, consciousness of being a sinner unworthy of his position, and concern for the salvation of his soul, I am proposing a possible complementary interpretation for the inclusion of this dream in the *Chronicle*.

The narrative unfolds in the context of a series of disputes inherited by the diocese and its title holders, which include Thietmar, together with the Ekkehardiner,³³ resulting from the suppression and subsequent reestablishment of the bishopric. The dream and the hostile acts Thietmar himself links to them allow him to specify and substantiate his prerogatives and duties as bishop: the power to ban; the obligation to visit the jurisdiction and to defend the collecting of taxes (tithes) and the bishopric's possessions against the attacks and abuses of laymen (and other ecclesiastics as well).³⁴

Thus, in addition to expressing concern about the future of his Christian soul and explaining his sinful behaviour as a consequence of the drinking of a mixture of herbs,³⁵ within the context of a diocese restored and in the process of fully reaffirming its prerogatives, narrating the dream presents the chronicler with a unique opportunity not only to repeat and confirm the criticism of the figure held responsible for its dissolution, archbishop Giselher, but also to reinforce the image of himself as an administrator—not always successful—dedicated to strengthening the episcopal see and guaranteeing the full exercise of all its rights, including ancient ones suspended at the time.³⁶ By recounting his dream and seeking to explain it by means of events that had actually occurred, Thietmar, an explicit proponent of the *Amtsbischöfe*, makes use of it to revalidate his role and functions in the history he writes of a diocese convulsed by conflict.

and thus forfeited the salvation to have: as a bishop as a nobleman, as a human being and perhaps even as a chronicler". Goetz, Hans-Werner. "Die Chronik Thietmars...": 269.

33. Trillmich, Werner. "Einleitung...": XXII.

34. Thietmar von Merseburg. *Chronik*...: VIII, 21.

35. *Thietmars Selbstbezeichnungen resultieren tatsächlich aus der Angst um das eigene Seelenheil* ("Thietmar's self-accusations are indeed the results of his fear concerning his own salvation"). Goetz, Hans-Werner. "Die Chronik Thietmars...": 268-269.

36. Again, I am taking into consideration Thietmar's self-awareness of his role as bishop as complementary to his Christian recognition of himself as sinner, while Goetz concentrates on Thietmar's identity problems (particularly his sinful behaviour): *Thietmar schrieb seine Chronik zur Selbstrechtfertigung: seines Bistums und seiner Politik, aber auch seiner selbst, als Buße und als Aufforderung an die Leser zur Gebetshilfe* ("Thietmar wrote his chronicle for the justification of his bishopric and his politics, but also of himself, as penitence and as a call to the readers to aid in prayer"). Goetz, Hans-Werner. "Die Chronik Thietmars...": 269.



DE ORIGINE CIVITATIS. THE BUILDING OF CIVIC IDENTITY IN ITALIAN COMMUNAL CHRONICLES (12TH-14TH CENTURY)

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ABSTRACT

One of the most striking expressions of political identity of the Italian medieval cities is the early creation of municipal myths of origin. Most communal cities could relate themselves to ancient heroes, saints or emperors who were claimed to be their first founders in past centuries. Such a legendary creation of the origin was obviously an ideological tool to improve the municipal sense of identity. This paper aims to study the changing attitudes of municipal elites towards the ancient history of the city, starting from the first municipal chronicles in 12th century, through the great universal narratives of the 13th, until the dawn of humanistic historiography in late 14th.¹

KEYWORDS

Communal Cities, Historiography, Sense of the Past, Municipal Origins, Political Identities.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Civitates, Communes, Historiographia, Praeteriti interpretatio, Municipii Origo, Identitas Politica.

1. Introduction

Political identities in central-northern Italy during the late Middle Ages are first and foremost municipal identities. In this paper I would like to outline the way in which civic memory in Italian city-states was able to draw a narrative of the origin of the city itself as an ideological image useful for its present. Sources for such a study are extremely rich. Since the 12th century, while chronicles and histories throughout Europe were devoted to kingdoms, feudal dynasties and churches, we find in Italy a typical municipal pattern of chronicles, in which municipal identities were the very subject of narration. There are, moreover, different kinds of narratives: biographies, contemporary chronicles, epic narrations, legendary and hagiographic works: with a huge tradition of historiographic discussion on it.²

Amidst such a huge amount of sources, my purpose is quite humble. My issue here is the subject of the origin of the city in municipal chronicles. What is the meaning of the origins for medieval chroniclers in an urban context? And what were they ready to try, and perhaps even create, in order to provide their city with a noble birth? The question concerns not only the different choices of the authors. Recent historiography about cultural memory has shown that collective memory is a step towards building a shared identity:³ our sources allow us to understand how this building was achieved in late medieval culture.

2. Incredible origins

Every medieval city has its own particular myth of its origins. It is a fact that affects not only cities, of course: the 'incredible genealogies' of the western aristocracies were conceived for the same purposes, and something similar can be seen in religious communities.⁴ In any case, Italian cities were a good context for the creation of an ancient past, above all because their material landscape was usually made of monumental relics of a great Roman past: too ancient to be really

1. I would like to thank Enrico Faini for his many bibliographical suggestions and the discussion of the subject of this paper.

2. As a general starting point see: *Il senso della storia nella cultura medievale italiana (1100-1350)*, *Atti del XIV Convegno di Studi (Pistoia, 14-17 maggio 1993)*. Pistoia: Centro italiano di Studi di storia e d'arte, 1995; Bartoli Langelì, Attilio; Chaix, Gérald, dirs. *La mémoire de la cité. Modèles antiques et réalisations renaissantes. Actes du colloque de Tours (28-30 septembre 1995)*. Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1997; Arnaldi, Girolamo. "Annali, cronache, storie", *Lo spazio letterario del Medioevo. I. Il Medioevo latino. Vol. I. La produzione del testo*, Guglielmo Cavallo, Claudio Leonardi, Enrico Menestò, eds. Rome: Salerno, 1993: 463-513; other contributions will be quoted in next pages.

3. Assmann, Jan. *La memoria culturale. Scrittura, ricordo e identità politica nelle grandi civiltà antiche*. Turin: Einaudi, 1997 (the original version was published in German, Munich, 1992); Fentress, James J.; Wickham, Chris. *Social memory*. Oxford-Cambridge (Mass.): Blackwell, 1992.

4. Bizzocchi, Roberto. *Genealogie incredibili: scritti di storia nell'Europa moderna*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2009; Ruiz Domenec, José Enrique. *La memoria dei feudali*. Naples: Guida, 1993.



understood in their historical frame, but familiar enough to give the city a sense of ancientness. As a consequence, most medieval narratives on the origin of the cities look back to a legendary past. Just to quote some of the most famous cases, the small city of Asti was claimed to have been built by the grandson of Jafet, Noah's son; the same biblical origin was recounted of Subres, the ancestor of Milan. Again in northern Italy, in Brescia and Ravenna, municipal legends spoke about a foundation by legendary sons of Noah after the great flood and the destruction of the tower of Babel.

Compared to these legends, the origins of Florence are in a sense much more modest. Municipal stories told of the foundation of Fiesole as a work of *Dardanus*, the first king of Troy: Florence was the Roman heir of the earlier Fiesole. In a similar way Padua, Perugia, Genoa aimed to connect their origin to the Trojan history and its heroes.⁵

We will discuss in detail some of these narratives, but as a first step we can stress that most of them refer to two different sets of legendary memories: the Bible and the Trojan War. There is here a literary reference to the general history of the municipal world provided by Isidoro's *Etymologiae*: first of all the *Hispalensis* put the origin of the cities within the uncertain field of the legend, and in any case he generally referred the most ancient foundation of the cities to biblical characters or Greek heroes.⁶ The case of biblical reference is much easier to understand: it was a clear attempt to make the memory of the city sacred; in this sense, a biblical foundation has the same role played by the holy relics in municipal ceremonies and public liturgies. When, on the contrary, cities were related to the Trojan legends, the meaning was more complex. First, it was a reference to the most celebrated author of Latin heritage, Virgil, the forerunner of the Christian faith; but at the same time, to have been founded by a Trojan hero put the city on a pair with Rome. A Trojan foundation was a cultural challenge to the role of Rome as unique *caput mundi*: this is the reason why such a legend was used by many cities, in order to suggest their freedom from a central power in Rome: the empire, the papacy. It is quite the same strategy used by the medieval historians of European kingdoms: the Trojan legend of the Frankish kingdom dates back to the 8th century, and English kings likewise claimed their remote origins from Trojan heroes arrived on the isle of Albion.⁷

In any case, despite this general aim of antiquity, the study of the single municipal chronicles since the 12th century shows that a narrative of the origins of the city did not exist in more ancient texts: it appears in the late 13th century, and usually not before. For communal cities, the creation itself of an ancient history has its own

5. A first sight on this subject (not very concerned about chronological differences) is: Villard, Renaud. "Le héros introuvable: les récits de fondation de cités en Italie: XIV-XVI siècles". *Histoire, Économie et Société*, 19/1 (2000): 5-24.

6. A collection of municipal origins is the first chapter of the XV book of the *Etymologiae*. Isidori Hispalensis. "Etymologiarum Sive Originum Liber XV". *The Latin Library*. 4 January 2014 <<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/isidore/15.shtml>>.

7. Beaune, Colette. *Naissance de la nation France*. Paris: Gallimard, 1985; the history of the early origins of the English kings from the Trojan Brutus was told by Geoffrey of Monmouth in the 12th century.



history: it is not a 'natural' attempt to project the present identity on the past, but rather a product of social and political context in a particular period of municipal history.

In order to follow this evolution, we will start from the earlier testimonies and go on to the period of the great chronicles of the 14th century. It is not possible, of course, given the peculiarity of each city, to find a perfectly coherent evolution. We will simply try to trace some general directions.

3. The history without origins

Many Italian city-states have their histories early in the 12th century. Usually the texts are composed in form of *Annales*, with basic local data in chronological order, with frequent references to the political regime of *consules* and *potestates* within the city. The impression of a very humble beginning depends also on the fact that usually the *Annales* are given in the 13th century manuscripts, or even later, without a clear reference to the author and the original circumstances of composition. Milan, a great political and religious centre long before the beginning of the communal history, has the most ancient chroniclers. Most of them simply chose to tell their contemporary history, as did Gerardo Maurisio at the beginning of the 13th century in March of Verona. Furthermore, such a contemporary history has a strong monographic subject: the internal struggles between the Milanese factions, or the growth of the Da Romano dynasty.⁸ The greatest chronicler of the first period of communal historiography, however, is Caffaro of Genoa. He wrote his *Annales Ianuenses*⁹ around 1160, as an official assignment by the city, when he was already an old man, after a long career in political life. Caffaro's history starts with the year 1099, when the Genoese ships (and Caffaro himself!) gave their help to the crusades to conquer Laodicea, a crucial step toward Jerusalem. After the first chapter, the *Annali* follow an annual narration up to the present. When Caffaro died, his work was continued by other chroniclers and notaries of the commune, throughout the whole 13th century, as an entire work of municipal history.

Even in this case, well known for its richness and detail, the chronicle lacks any reference to the ancient history of the city: on the contrary, it starts with a quite

8. Landulphi junioris sive de Sancto Paulo. *Historia Mediolanensis ab anno MXCV usque ad annum MCXXXVII*, ed. Carlo Castiglioni. Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1934 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, III); Gerardi Maurisii. *Cronica dominorum Ecelini et Alberici fratrum de Romano (aa. 1183-1237)*, ed. Giovanni Soranzo. Città di Castello: Tipi dell'editore S. Lapi, 1914 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, VIII.4). The *Historiae Mediolanenses* of Landulfus Senior in late 11th century are an episcopal chronicle since the time of Ambrosius, very concerned about the recent religious and political events. Landulfus, Senior. *Historiae Mediolanenses*, ed. Alessandro Cutolo. Città di Castello: Tipi dell'editore S. Lapi, 1899 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, IV.2).

9. *Annali Genovesi di Caffaro e de' suoi continuatori dal MXCIX al MCCXCIII*, ed. Luigi Tommaso Belgrano. Genoa: Sordo-muti, 1890 (*Fonti per la Storia d'Italia*, I.11).



contemporary event, which Caffaro recalled from his own personal memory. As a result, in Caffaro and his successors, Genoa appears already mature in its political identity: when its history starts, the city is already involved as an important player in the Mediterranean history. In this sense, Caffaro's narrative is much more the history of the commune than the history of the city. To follow the opinion of Élisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, *l'histoire surgit en même temps que la commune*.¹⁰

The Pisan chronicler Bernardo Maragone, who died in 1190, was more or less contemporary of Caffaro. His *Annales Pisani* are nevertheless quite different from the former Genoese example. Pisan society during the 12th century had a very strong relationship with Roman culture: linguistic and literary knowledge of the classical world was profound and the commune itself tried to shape its laws according to the Roman *Corpus Iuris*.¹¹ Pisa, moreover, is one of the very few communal cities with a local epical tradition, written to celebrate the naval fights of the early century against Muslim pirates. The same classical allure led Maragone to write a chronicle that gave a relevant place to ancient history. The very first chapter of the *Annales* reports a short draft on human history since the Creation -taken from the Bible and the classical text of Eusebius and Orosius. No reference is attempted to the origin of the city. Pisa appears only with the medieval conflicts with Muslims and Tuscan neighbors: *871 fuerunt pisani in Calabria*, and a few lines above *1004 Pisani fecerunt bellum cum lucensibus, et vicerunt illos in Aqualonga*. Then, as the events of the 11th century begin to unfold, Maragone starts to tell a more detailed history of his city, usually with a great attention to military expeditions against *saraceni*.¹²

Caffaro and Maragone are the best known chroniclers of their century. Nevertheless, the general trend of communal historiography of the century is provided by the anonymous series of *Annales*, whose composition is testified in many different cities. It is quite difficult to seize their features because of the lack of authorship and the uncertain dating, and consequently their composition and contents must be considered in a broad range of chronology. Anyway, most of them show similar approach to the municipal past.

The *Annales* devote their narration to the contemporary history. Usually the beginning of the text focuses the events of the early 11th century, just before the birth of communal institutions: and even for that period the narrative usually consists of a very narrow line of events until the time that the author can directly remember.¹³

10. "The history emerged at the same time that the commune". Crouzet-Pavan, Élisabeth. "Gênes et Venise: discours historiques et imaginaires de la cité", *Le forme della propaganda politica nel Due e Trecento*, Paolo Cammarosano, ed. Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 1994: 427-453 and especially 432.

11. Wickham, Chris. *Legge, pratiche e conflitti: tribunali e risoluzione delle dispute nella Toscana del XII secolo*. Rome: Viella, 2000.

12. Maragone, Bernardo. *Gli Annales Pisani di Bernardo Maragone*, ed. Michelle Lupo Gentile. Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1936 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinequecento*, VI.2).

13. Faini, Enrico. "Alle origini della memoria comunale. Prime ricerche". *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 88 (2008): 61-81; Faini, Enrico. "Annali cittadini, memoria pubblica ed eloquenza civite in età comunale". *Storica*, 61-62 (2015): 109-142.



The *Chronicon Mutinense*, for example, is known in a 14th century re-elaboration of an earlier version. The beginnings of the alleged original text are very poor:

*In anno Christi MII Otto imperator obiit. MIII Henricus imperator ordinatus fuit. MXXIV Henricus imperator obiit. MXXV Conradus imperator ordinatur. MXXXVII Communitas et societas facta est in communi Parmae, scilicet Parmenses cum mutinensibus. Et tunc erat rex Conradus. MXLVII Henricus imperator ordinatus est. MLII Bonifacius marchio obiit. MLVII Henricus imperator obiit. MLXIX Bononia igne cremata est. MLXX Gotofredus dux obiit. MLXXVII Gregorius papa fuit in castro Carpi. MLXXXIV Castrum Nonantulae obsessum fuit a comitissima Mathelda. MLXXXV Fuit fames magna.*¹⁴

It is unclear whether these words were used by the main sources of the chronicle, but it seems possible that the passages on the 11th century were original. The author uses first of all a chronological list of emperors, as a common frame of Italian history, and then attaches short snippets of information about Modena and its relations with feudal or municipal powers. In this way, the *Annales* begin to be a history of the city only after a century of events.

War and internal conflicts are the main (usually the only) subject of the earlier accounts. The *Annales Mediolanenses breves*, whose compositions date to just after 1228, cannot avoid a preliminary quotation of Saint Ambrogius, Milan's patron, but the first political event is the war against Lodi in 1111;¹⁵ the *Annales florentini* use quite the same beginning—the war against the Cadolingi, feudal lords in val di Pesa, in 1110.¹⁶ The *Annales Cremonenses* can be considered a more complex example, very representative of such a typology of historical approach. This is the beginning of the work:

Quando peregrini ceperunt Hyerusalem et Antiochiam currebant 1096. In mense octobris iverunt, et eo tempore fuerunt Cremonae.

Quando prima guerra de Crema fuit 1098 infra Madium.

Quando Cremonenses, Laudenses et Papienses incenderunt burghum Derthone, 1107 in vigilia sancti Bartolomei.

Quando Bellum brixianorum fuit, 1110 infra iunium, in vigilia sancti Imerii. Et in eodem anno Henricus rex filius fuit Romae, papamque cepit Paschalem [...].

14. Bazano, Iohannis de. *Chronicon Mutinensein*, ed. Tommaso Casini. Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1916: 555-638 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, XV). See also: *Cronache modenese di Alessandro Tassoni, di Giovanni da Bazzano e di Bonifazio Morano*, ed. Luigi Vischi, Tommaso Sandonnini, Odoardo Raselli. Modena: Soliani, 1888.

15. "Annales Mediolanenses breves", *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz. Hannover: Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1863: XVIII, 389-391. The *Annales Mediolanenses minores* (392-399), are a more complex composition of religious and civic accounts, from the age of Christ until 1280: but the first report related with municipal history dates to 1061 *fuit bellum in Campo-mortuo prope Sedezanum inter Mediolanum et Papiam*. About the early Milanese chronicles see: Martini, Giuseppe. "Lo spirito cittadino e le origini della storiografia comunale lombarda". *Nuova Rivista Storica*, 54 (1970): 1-22.

16. In the early version of *Annales florentini*; a second ancient chronicle of the city (*Annales florentini II*) starts with 1107. See for both: *Quellen und Forschungen zur Ältesten Geschichte der Stadt Florenz*, ed. Otto Hartwig. Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1880: II, 3,40.



After 1180, the *Annales* begin to follow the series of cremonese *potestates* until the first decades of 13th century.¹⁷

Sometimes war and conflicts are considered as the remote origin of the political struggle of the present. In the *Annales placentini guelfi*, which Giovanni Codagnello composed around 1230 using an early anonymous chronicle of the 12th century, the first events reported are the death of the bishop Sigefredo in 1012, a great famine in 1085, the *prima guerra Creme* in 1088, and finally (1090) the *sedicio magna* [...] *inter populum et milites Placentie*, with the ensuing peace: a clear prefiguration of the *milites-populus* struggle of the following century.¹⁸

Incidentally, even though each chronicle was composed in different municipal contexts, for the earlier accounts many authors tended to emphasize the same events: the succession and the Italian passages of the emperors, the worst famines (in particular that of 1085)¹⁹ and the glorious deeds of the crusaders —whose passage is sometimes directly connected with the city, as already shown for the case of Cremona.

A second pattern of communal narrative is the chronological list of municipal officers. Since the *consules* and *potestates* were the most important institutions in 12th and early 13th century cities, it comes as no surprise that the chroniclers chose to follow the series of the annual officers as the backbone of municipal history. It must be stressed, however, that the use of series of officials is typical of the 13th century and not before. Here, much more than in other cases, the history of the city is perfectly the same of the history of its political regime. Among the most clear examples, the *Annales arretinorum maiores* since 1192,²⁰ or the *Chronica potestatum* of Orvieto (since 1194),²¹ or again the first draft of the earlier Chronicle of Todi, now lost, which started with a series of *potestates* since 1201.²² The *Chronica potestatum*

17. “*Annales Cremonenses*”, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores*, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger. Hannover: Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1903: XXXI, 800-807.

18. “*Annales Placentini guelfi*”, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz. Hannover: Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1863: XVIII, 411-457.

19. Even in *Annales veronenses breves* (late 12th century) (“*Annales veronenses breves*”, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores*. Hannover: Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1866: XIX, 1-4), the first account is *in anno 1095 fuit fames valida in universo*, then the death of *marchio Bonifacius* and *comitissa Mathilde*; from 1149 appear municipal events: *1149 combusta fuit porta sancti Zenonis, et captum fuit castrum sancti Petri de Verona* and *1151 hedificatum fuit castrum Hostilie a Veronensibus*.

20. *Annales arretinorum maiores et minores*, eds. Arturi Bini, Giovanni Grazzini. Città di Castello: Tipi dell'editore S. Lapi, 1909 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, XXIV.1).

21. *Ephemerides Urbevetanae dal cod. Vaticano Urbinate 1745*, ed. Luigi Fumi. Città di Castello: Tipi dell'editore S. Lapi, 1903 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, XV.5); “*Cronica potestatum (1194-1322)*”, *Ephemerides Urbevetanae dal cod. Vaticano Urbinate 1745*, ed. Luigi Fumi. Città di Castello: Tipi dell'editore S. Lapi, 1903: 137-182 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, XV.5).

22. *Le cronache di Todi (secoli XIII-XVI)*, eds. Giuliana Italiani, Claudio Leonardi, Franco Mancini, Enrico Menestò, Carlo Santini, Gina Scentoni. Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1979. Another example is the 13th century chronicle of Mantua: *In anno 1183 consul maior civitatis Mantue dominus Zachonus de Grossolanis. Et eo tempore interfectus fuit dominus Ugo linus de Oldevrandis. In 1184 in 1185 in 1186 episcopus Grasciuvinus fuit potestas Mantue; et in primo anno papa Lucius venit Veronam; et in secunda potestaria idem papa obiit, et in*



was a perfect pattern of annalistic narrative, and the author could use the same approach of a monastic, episcopal or dynastic chronicler. Moreover, it allowed the chronicler to emphasize the continuity of urban identity throughout the decades. For that reason, even in late 13th century, authors such as the anonymous Paduan of the *Annales* chose to use this kind of chronicle, just to draw the communal history as a coherent evolution, and to erase from the narrative the painful rupture of the seignorial tyranny of Ezzelino da Romano.²³

Considering the whole communal world of the 12th-13th century, there is a relevant exception in such a contemporary approach, that of Venice. While we cannot read anything about the origins of the city in any municipal chronicle, Venice has its original chronicles since the Early Middle Ages. Around 1008, a Venetian cleric called Giovanni Diacono wrote his *Historia*, telling the glorious story of the foundation of Venice upon the sea, and the translation of the relics of Saint Mark within the city.²⁴ There is no legend in Giovanni's narrative: on the contrary, the earlier *Chronicon Altinate* gathered a lot of fabulous histories about the ancient cities of *Venetia*, and many of them are related to a common Trojan origin:

*Totos namque prenomatos antiquiores et nobiliores Venetiquos, quos singulatim nominatos habemus, fuerunt ab antiquis eorum progenie sicuti commemoratos abemus. Deinde vero recollegerunt se in antiqua Venecia ex diversis provinciis; edificantes castra, manserunt ibi. Prima extitit Adres, qua huc mare ab illa civitate nomen accepit, quod a Adriatico sinu nominatur. Deinde Aquilegia, nobillissima et precipuam, et Concordiam, Antinopoli, Padua et Mantua, Verona, Gardisana, Ovederço et Altinense pulcherima civitate et Auxolum castellum pulcherimum, quia terra usque ad culmine mellorum a gradibus ascendeat, Tarvisana, Cormona, Freyna, Modena, vegla Vercellis, Plasencia, Crisopula, que Parma appellata est. Tote iste quas supra diximus civitates et cetere alie, que innumerande sunt, et eum castellum Auxolum mirabile edificaverunt ipsi Troiani, que cum Enea illorum princeps, quos antea gentiles fuerunt, venientes de illa antiqua magne Troie; que modo ab Enea nomine Andreatai Enetici nuncupantur. Enetici namque laudabiles dicuntur.*²⁵

tercia factum fuit concordium Suzarie, et ibi mortus et sepultus est. In 1187 et 1188 et 1189 domnus Atto Pagani de Pergamo fuit potestas Mantue; et in ipso anno capta fuit Fracta a Veronensibus, et multi Ferrarienses capti fuerunt et ducti Veronam; et dedicata est ecclesia maior Verone a papa Urbano. Et capta fuit terra de ultra marii a Saladino; et in secundo anno mantuani inceperunt facere pontem molendinorum, et in tercio anno comes Sotus interfectus est, et nobiles de Ripalta inceperunt pontem suprascriptum. "Annales Mantuani", Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores. Scriptores rerum germanicarum jn usum scolaticum, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz. Hannover: Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1866: XIX, 19-31.

23. The chronicle is more detailed after 1260, but the most important gap in composition is about 1290. Bortolami, Sante. "Per la storia della storiografia comunale: il "Chronicon de potestatibus Padue". *Archivio Veneto*, 105 (1975) 69-121, and especially 86.

24. The author, who wrote after 1008, was an ambassador of the Doge Pietro II Orseolo to the Emperor Otto III. Diacono, Giovanni. *Istoria Veneticorum*, ed. Luigi Andrea Berto. Rome-Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli -Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 1999.

25. "Chronicon Venetum quod vulgo dicunt Altinate", *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores (in Folio)*, ed. Henry Simonsfeld. Hannover: Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1883: XIV, 33.



Some of the stories that the *Chronica* reports refer to the famous text of Paolus Diaconus,²⁶ but most municipal cases in this passage are an original creation of the anonymous writer. There is here, undoubtedly, a Venetian originality. But at the same time these texts cannot be considered properly as a municipal history. Giovanni Diacono was the ambassador of the Doge Peter Orseolo by Otto III: his work grew in a byzantine context much more than in a communal city. Moreover, the author (or maybe the authors) of the *Chronicon Altinate* aimed to tell the history of the earlier bishopric of *Venetia* (*Altinum*, Aquileia, Grado, Torcello): therefore, their approach is much more similar to an episcopal history than to a municipal narratives. Even in Venice, 13th century *Annales* were a mere contemporary history.²⁷

In conclusion: For what reason were the earlier chronicles actually written? And above all, what were their authors seeking in the municipal past?

The contents of the *Annales* aim to emphasize the warrior ethics of the municipal *milites*.²⁸ The ruling class of the earlier commune was composed of an urban aristocracy acquainted with the war as a social attitude.²⁹ By reading and writing the past, therefore, they were looking for proof for their central role in municipal identity. Sometimes it was a 'great' war, the sublime struggle against the enemies of the faith: it was the case of the maritime cities (Genoa, Pisa), or sometimes the cities along the *via romea*, the way to Rome used by pilgrims. But if such a noble enemy was not available in recent the past, this warrior memory could be composed of the never ending conflicts with the neighbours.³⁰

If considered within the general history of medieval Italy, the events that open most urban chronicles are not so relevant: fights of little account, probably so frequent that even the authors could mistake one for another. But from inside the city, they were important as the justification of the *milites'* regime.

What we must stress here, is that the whole tradition of earlier chronicles gives no references to the origins of the city. The authors were proud of the military achievements of their cities, but they did not seem to be interested in their remote origins. The only origins they consider is the historical core of a ruling class based on war, but no more than this.³¹ Neither was the social memory of the city very

26. *Historia Langobardorum*, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores. Scriptores rerum germanicarum jn usum scolaticum*, ed. Georg Waitz. Hannover: Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1873: II, 14-23.

27. See the case of the *Annales venetici breves* and the *Historia ducum veneticorum*: "Annales Venetici breves", *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores (in Folio)*, ed. Henry Simonsfeld. Hannover: Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1883: XIV, 70-73.

28. A recent and good consideration of the connection between the 12th century historiography and the role of *milites* is: Faini, Enrico. "La memoria dei 'milites'", *I comuni di Jean-Claude Maire Vigueur. Percorsi storiografici*, Maria Teresa Caciorgna, Sandro Carocci, Andrea Zorzi, eds. Rome: Viella, 2014: 113-133.

29. Gasparri, Stefano. *I "milites" cittadini. Studi sulla cavalleria in Italia*. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1992; Maire Vigueur, Jean-Claude. *Cavalieri e cittadini. Guerra conflitti e società nell'Italia comunale*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2004 (the original version was published in France, in Paris, 2003).

30. Maire Vigueur, Jean-Claude. *Cavalieri e cittadini...*: 38-63.

31. Wickham, Chris. "The Sense of the Past in Italian Communal Narratives", *The perception of the Past in twelfth-century Europe*, Paul Magdalino, ed. London-Rio Grande: Hambledon Press, 1992: 173-189; on this



interested in large scale history: even the *libri iurium* of the 12th-early 13th century pay very little attention to a general historical approach to the past.³²

To tell the truth, the 'real' origins, that is to say the remote antiquities of the city, were not completely ignored in urban culture. Many examples of antiquarian interest, however, can be found only outside the chronicles, and in rather different cultural contexts. First of all, cathedral schools and chapters produced, early in 12th and more often in the 13th century, important works of municipal religious antiquities.

In Florence, for example, the first narrative of the legendary foundation of the city, starting from the Trojan origin of Fiesole, was the *Chronica de origine civitatis Florentie*. The text was probably written in 1205, by a cleric in Bishop Giovanni da Velletri's circle. In a striking opposition with the contemporary *Annales florentini*, the *Chronica* is very rich concerning the legend of Fiesole, but at the same time it pays no attention to the recent history.³³ This is the reason why the Chronicle was mainly ignored by later authors of Florentine history before Dante.³⁴

Such a distance of the clerical historians from the political history of their city can be verified much more clearly in hagiographic works. The municipal memory of the past was usually an hagiographic memory, concerning the first saint or the first bishop. In medieval Modena, the story of the invention of the relics of San Geminano was one of the most famous sources for the growth of a civic identity; in Bononia the hagiographic texts on the relics of San Petronio played a similar role.³⁵ Their authors, however, did not compose a history of the city. The legendary or historical events of the life of the saints looked like flashes of an uncertain antiquity, with no direct connection with the annalistic history. Therefore, already during the first decades of 13th century, in most Italian cities local memory is composed by a historical narrative without origins, and a hagiographic antiquity without history.

subject see recently: Faini, Enrico. "Alle origini della memoria comunale...": 61-81; with a broad survey of many Italian chronicles of the 12th century.

32. Cammarosano, Paolo. "I 'Libri iurium' e la memoria storica delle città comunali", *Il senso della storia nella cultura medievale italiana (1100-1350)*, *Atti del XIV Convegno di Studi (Pistoia, 14-17 maggio 1993)*. Pistoia: Centro italiano di Studi di storia e d'arte, 1995; Bartoli Langeli, Attilio; Chaix, Gérald, dirs. *La mémoire de la cité...*: 309-325; about the relations between history and public records see: Arnaldi, Girolamo. "Cronache con documenti, cronache 'autentiche' e pubblica storiografia", *Fonti medioevali e problematica storiografica*, *Atti del Congresso tenutosi in occasione del 90° anniversario della fondazione dell'Istituto Storico Italiano (1883-1973) (Roma 22-27 ottobre 1973)*. Roma: Istituto storico italiano per il Medioevo, 1976: 351-374 (reprinted in: *Storici e storiografia del medioevo italiano: antologia di saggi*, ed. Gabriele Zanella. Bologna: Pàtron, 1984: 111-137); Faini, Enrico. "La memoria dei 'milites'...": 113-133.

33. *Chronica de origine civitatis Florentiae*, ed. Ricardo Chellini. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 2009.

34. "il silenzio dei cronisti attivi fra la seconda metà del XIII secolo e i primi decenni del XIV suggerisce che nei confronti dell'opuscolo sia prevalso un certo scetticismo e che ad esso fosse accordato un valore più letterario che storiografico". *Chronica de origine civitatis ...*: 147.

35. *Relatio translationis corporis Sancti Geminiani (MXCIX-MCVI)*, ed. Giulio Bertoni. Città di Castello: Tipi dell'editore S. Lapi, 1907 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, VI.1); Pini, Antonio Ivan. "Origini e testimonianze del sentimento civico bolognese", *La coscienza cittadina nei comuni italiani del Duecento, XI Convegno del Centro di studi sulla spiritualità medievale (11-14 ottobre 1970)*. Todi: Accademia Tudertina, 1972: 137-193.



4. The first steps of integration

The distance between the legendary origins and the memory of the historical past begins to be narrowed during the 13th century. The *Gesta florentinorum* of Sanzanome da Firenze were composed around 1231:³⁶ here the legend of the foundation of the city, that was derived from the former *Chronica de origine*, is a short introduction to the second part of the work, a history of Florence from 1125 to the present. It was quite a new choice in its composition. Nevertheless, Sanzanome wrote above all in order to provide his readers with a rhetorical model. The *Gesta* used very frequently to tell the history of Florence through the speeches of the most important characters: a kind of *oratio ficta* composed as a model of political speech. History, therefore, is not the central aim of the author, rather a useful frame for rhetorical purposes.³⁷

Quite similar to Sanzanome's work was the *Cronaca di Faenza* of *magister Tolosanus*, a secular cleric, which was devoted to the city's Roman past. Tolosano tells the story of the Roman origin of the city, and he does actually go forward in his narrative until his present time. In any case, the *Cronaca* pays very little attention to the political identity of the medieval commune, and his narrative follows the earlier examples of the chronicles *rhétorisantes*.³⁸

The best example of the evolution of historical attitudes in early 13th is maybe the *Chronicon* of Sicardus bishop of Cremona (death in 1215). The *Chronicon* is a very traditional history *ab origine mundi*; its sources are mainly Gerolamo, Orosius and Bede for the first part, that follows the standard partition of universal history in six eras.³⁹ With the 9th century and the post-carolingian period, Sicardo begins to add some reference to the succession of Cremonese bishops. For the 11th century this episcopal memory is mixed with the genuine communal history, that Sicardus would have been able to read in the early version of the *Annales Cremonenses*. For the last decades until 1212 the bishop uses above all his personal memory. Such an historical composition recalls the case of Bernardo Maragone. Sicardus, however, shows a deeper grade of integration of the different historical levels, from the universal history to the municipal scale: and even if he gives no accounts of

36. Faini, Enrico. "Una storia senza nomi. Storia e memoria a Firenze ai primi del Duecento". *Bullettino dell'istituto storico italiano per il medio evo*, 108 (2006): 39-81.

37. It is the recent interpretation of Enrico Faini (Faini, Enrico. "Lettere politiche nella storiografia comunale", *Cum verbis ut Italici solent ornatissimis*. *Funktionen der Beredsamkeit im kommunalen Italien / Funzioni dell'eloquenza nell'Italia comunale*, Florian Hartmann, ed. Bonn: Bonn University Press, 2011: 89-110). In this sense the case of Sanzanome can be compared with the *Liber de Obsidione Ancone* in which Buoncompagno da Signa speaks very shortly about the Roman origin of the city; the very centre of the works are the political speeches reported as a rhetoric model. See: *Boncompagni Liber de obsidione Ancone* (a. 1173), ed. Giulio C. Zimolo. Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1937 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, VI.3).

38. See again: Faini, Enrico. "La memoria dei 'milites'...": 113-133; Magistri Tolosani. *Chronicon Faventinum*, ed. Giuseppe Rossini. Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1937-1939 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, XXVIII.1).

39. Falco, Giorgio. *La polemica sul Medioevo*. Naples: Guida, 1977: 31-42.



the ancient origins of his city, he uses a passage from the *Chronicon Altinate* on the ancient origins of Venetian cities.⁴⁰

As a last example, we can quote the case of Giovanni Codagnello.⁴¹ The Placentine chronicler composed an original collection of texts short after 1235: some of them were simply copied from earlier sources, some were written by Codagnello himself; in any case, his 13th century manuscript gathers a *storia favolosa* of the ancient origins of Milan and Piacenza, with a short history during the period of the Lombard kingdom, some stories about Costantin and the *translatio imperii*, a chronicle of the Frederick Barbarossa's wars in Italy and a copy of the *Annales placentini*, re-elaborated by Codagnello. The chronicler, in this case, aims to gather different texts, in which the ancient origins are placed beside the more recent narrative as a textual operation *ex post*.

4.1 A new history: between the 13th and 14th century

The turning point of the historiographical practice of communal Italy is the late 13th and early 14th century. Most municipal chronicles of this period start their narratives from a short introduction on the origin of the city, as an attempt to provide the municipal identity with a claim of antiquity. The ancient times are no more a generic frame of universal history, rather a legendary (but sometimes historical) foreword to the original history of the city.

A beautiful case in this sense is Genoa. During the 12th and mainly the 13th century Genoa told its own history as the official continuation of Caffaro's Annals, without any reference to the antiquity, before the starting point of 1099. In 1294 one of Caffaro's successors, the Genoese notary Jacopo Doria, was the first to compose a legendary foreword to his chapters of municipal history: the legendary story of the foundation of the city by the mythic hero *Ianus*.⁴² In the very same years, about 1298, the dominican friar and hagiograph Jacopo da Varagine, bishop of Genoa, wrote his *Historia Ianuensis*.⁴³ From the first lines of his work, Jacopo deplores the lack of attention towards the origin of the city in former chroniclers: in order to cross the obstacle of the sources, the bishop tells the story about *Ianus*. Because, he

40. Sicardi, Cremonensis episcopi. "Cronica", *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores (in Folio)*, ed. Oswald Holder Egger. Hannover: Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1903: XXXI, 22-181 (especially 79).

41. For the problems of authorship of the different texts see: Arnaldi, Girolamo. "Codagnello, Giovanni", *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*. Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1982: 26, 562-568.

42. For the very prudent prologue on the ancient mentions of the city: *Annali genovesi di Caffaro e de'suoi continuatori dal MCLXXIV al MCCXXIV*, ed. Luigi Tomasso Belgrano. Genoa: Sordo-muti, 1890: V, 3-8; Zabbia, Marino. *I notai e la cronachistica cittadina italiana nel Trecento*. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 1999: 22; Beneš, Carrie E. *Urban Legends. Civic Identity and the Classical Past in Northern Italy, 1250-1350*. Pennsylvania University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011: 63-87.

43. On Iacopo da Varazze's philosophy of the history see: Farris, Giovanni; Delfino, Benedetto Tino, eds. *Iacopo da Varagine. Atti del I Convegno di Studi (Varazze, 13-14 aprile 1985)*. Cogoletto: SMA, 1987; Le Goff, Jacques. *À la recherche du temps sacré. Jacques de Varagine et la "Légende dorée"*. Paris: Perrin, 2011.



said, it is impossible to leave such an ancient and glorious city as Genoa without looking at its antiquities:

*Cogitantes igitur [...] quod multae civitates sunt in Ytalia, de quibus antiqui ystoriographi magnam faciunt mentionem, mirati sumus quod de civitate Ianuensi tam inclita, tam nobili, tam potenti, satis modica ab ipsis inveniuntur expressa. Causam hujus esse credimus, quia civitas Ianuensis, licet sit modo potens et maxima, ab antiquo fuit parva et modica [...]. Nos igitur ystorias communis Ianuae legentes, et diversas chronicas revolventes necnon et aliquorum auctorum dicta scrutantes, de civitate Ianue invenimus aliqua, quae presenti stilo iudicavimus adnotanda.*⁴⁴

At the same time, in the second ‘maritime city’ without an origin, Pisa, the whole 13th century passed without any attempt to cross the chronological limit posed by Maragone —the first accounts of Pisan maritime fights against the Muslims. The Dominican friar Bartolomeo di San Concordio was probably the first to tell in his *Liber de Orgine civitatis Pisanae* the legendary story of the origins of the city: Pisa was asserted to have been founded by Pelops, a Greek hero father of Atreus and ancestor of Agamemnon. Thus the ancient history of Pisa could reach the far antiquity: *vix reputo aliquam civitatem reperiri posse, quae magis ab antiquo constructa fuerit.*⁴⁵ But the invention of Bartolomeo was only a ‘monographic’ work. Around 1310, an anonymous chronicler decided to include the first chapter of Bartolomeus on the origin of Pisa in his global history of the city:⁴⁶ from that period onward, the chronicles of Pisa began to tell the municipal story from the story of its foundation until the present.⁴⁷

The Milanese Chronicler Giovanni da Cermenate wrote during the Italian expedition of Emperor Henry VII in Italy. His *History of Milan* follows above all the contemporary events, but with a legendary prologue on the origin of Milan, founded

44. Iacopo da Varagine e la sua Cronaca di Genova dalle origini al MCCXCVII. Studio introduttivo e testo critico commentato, ed. Giovanni Monleone. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 1941: II, 4-5 (*Fonti per la Storia d'Italia*, 84-86).

45. The text was edited by Ludovico Antonio Muratori. Da Vico Pisano, Michele. *Breviarium Pisanae Historiae*, ed. Ludovico Antonio Muratori. Bologna: Nicola Zanicheli, 1936 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, VI, 163-165).

46. Banti, Ottavio. “Studio sulla genesi dei testi cronistici pisani del secolo XIV”. *Bullettino dell'Istituto storico italiano per il medio evo*, 75 (1963): 259-319. The prologue reminds us the historical approach already seen in Iacopo da Varagine: *chome per alcune antiche scritture si trova le quali con pocho ordine e mal tenute, quale trattando d'una cosa e quale d'un'altra, che raccoltele insieme lo più che s'è potuto et ordinarle a' tempi ch'elle seguitonno, cominciando dal suo primo origine, et chi la puose, et dove prima ebbe principio mi sento gentile opera fare* (“given that there were some ancient scriptures, with few order and badly maintained, mixing one and other thing together, it just was possible to get some order, starting from its first origin and following by who got it, reason why I feel kind work to do”). Banti, Ottavio. “Studio sulla genesi dei testi...”: 281 (footnote 2).

47. See an early example of the ‘global’ history of the city in: *Cronica di Pisa. Dal ms. Roncioni dell'Archivio di Stato di Pisa. Edizione e commento*, ed. Cecilia Iannella. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 2005: 3-10.



by the heirs of Noah.⁴⁸ A few years later, after 1324, Pietro da Villola included a lengthy introduction in his contemporary history of Bologna, in which he uses some of the traditional legend on Bononia's antiquity: the biography and miracles of Saint Petronius and the *Teodosianum*, the decree with which the Emperor Teodosio was claimed to have created the University of Bononia in 409.⁴⁹ These legends were not created by Pietro, rather they were transmitted by hagiographic and episcopal texts: here the chronicler was the first to put them into a global historical narrative about the city. A similar situation can be traced for Venice early around 1275, when Martino da Canal composed his history of Venice: using the ancient episcopal chronicle, Martino introduced his work with a first section on the foundation of the city, and then he quickly arrived at the point of telling his contemporary history.⁵⁰

The integration of the legends of foundation with the 'real' recent history in all these chronicles had many effects on the general aspects of the chronicles themselves. They did not trace a coherent evolution of the city from the beginning to the present, because the origin and the real history were separated by a gap of many centuries that remains obscure and unknown. Such a floating gap, to use the definition suggested by Jan Assmann, is a typical feature of the cultural memory: around the gap, written history, depending on living memory of the writer, could coexist with the foundation of a cultural identity, which was the aim of the legendary origins.⁵¹ In any case, it is the very beginning of the 'incredible origins' of Italian city-states.

What is the historical meaning of the new way of writing history in late medieval cities? Why this passage occurs exactly at the end of the Duecento in such different contexts of Italian culture? First of all, the communal regimes of late Duecento were very concerned about the strengthening of the civic identity.⁵² In 1293 the commune of Perugia, a popular regime, commissioned to a poet, Bonifacius de Verona, the composition of an epic poem on the ancient times of the city, in order to provide Perugia with a narrative of the origins that the city still lacked. As a result of the communal effort, the *Liber antiquitatum comunis Perusii*, usually known as the *Euliste*, composed a history of the city from 1150 to 1293, with a large prologue on the story of the Trojan Euliste, the legendary founder of the city.⁵³

48. Giovanni da Cermenate. *Historia*, ed. Luigi Alberto Ferrai. Rome: Forzani, 1889 (*Fonti per la Storia d'Italia*, 2).

49. Pini, Antonio Ivan. "Origini e testimonianze del sentimento civico bolognese", *La coscienza cittadina nei comuni italiani del Duecento, XI Convegno del Centro di studi sulla spiritualità medievale (11-14 ottobre 1970)*. Todi: Accademia Tudertina, 1972: 137-193.

50. The author was probably not a noble citizen, may be a clerk of a public officer: he wrote between 1267 and 1275, telling the story of the ancient Aquileia, the foundation of Venice and the translation of Saint Mark's relics (I, 3-12), until the more detailed section on 12th and 13th centuries. Martin da Canal. *Les estoires de Venise. Cronaca veneziana in lingua francese dalle origini al 1275*, ed. Alberto Limentani. Florence: Olschki, 1975.

51. See: Assmann, Jan. *La memoria culturale...*

52. About the cases of Padua, Genoa, Siena and Perugia: Beneš, Carrie E. *Urban Legends...*

53. Galletti, Antonio Ivan. "Sant'Ercolano, il grifo e le lasche. Note sull'immaginario collettivo nell'età comunale, in *Forme e tecniche di potere nella città (secoli XIV-XVIII)*". *Annali della facoltà di Scienze*



In Perugia as well as in different Italian cities, there is a background of classicism in municipal society, and such communal classicism depends on the role of notarial culture. The notaries as a professional group brought into the institutions a broader knowledge and attention towards the classical world and, because of the relevant role played by notaries in many popular regimes, the claim of an antique face of the city enhanced it in new ways.⁵⁴

Besides the role of the notaries, there is another player in affecting the historical culture of the Italian city-states: the mendicant friars. Some of the chroniclers we have quoted in previous pages are friars: Jacopo da Voragine and Bartolomeo da San Concordio for example, and even the anonymous author of a 13th century chronicle from the church of Saint Fortunato of Todi, the first attempt to mix the ancient history of the city with the strange legends of its foundation.⁵⁵ Moreover, we must bear in mind that the early works of a 'global' history at the beginning of the century were composed in Cremona or Florence by clerics.

What is new in the late 13th century is that religious circles were now much more able to attract the attention of lay culture. Mendicant communities had a strong effect on urban society: their ability of communication allowed them to give a direction to the municipal culture. Many lay chroniclers lived in close contact with the mendicant communities of their city. Jacopo Doria with Jacopo da Varagine, Giovanni da Cermenate with the Dominican friar and historian Galvano Fiamma.⁵⁶ Alberto Milliolo was a notary of the commune of Reggio, close friend of Salimbene de Adam, who met at the Franciscan convent of Reggio. Around 1285 he wrote a *Liber de temporibus* following the series of popes since Saint Peter; from 1154 he starts a *memoriale omnium potestatum, consulum et rectorum civitatis regine* mixed with papal history, and for the 13th century the history of the city prevails on the short views of papal events.⁵⁷ Alberto did not use any reference to the origin of the city,

politiche dell'Università di Perugia, 16 (1979-1980): 203-216. The civic worship of Saint Ercolano was promoted in 13th century by the commune with a strong help of mendicant friars; *il tentativo del ceto dirigente di coprire un ultimo campo rimasto intatto* ("the willing of the ruling class in order to cover a last field remained intact") was concluded in 1293 when the commune committed to Bonifacio da Verona the *Liber antiquitatum comunis Perusii*, known as Eulisteia, composed with the purpose of *antiquitates reducere ad memoria pro honore comunis Perusii*. The poem is edited in: Bonifacii Veronensis. "De rebus a perusinis gestis Ann. MCL-MCCXCIII. Historia metrica quae vocatur Eulisteia ex Ms. Codice Perill Viri EQ. J. C. Contestable nunc prima edita". *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 16/1 (1850): 1-52.

54. The contribution of notaries to the municipal chronicles of 13th and 14th century has been studied (following the interpretation of Girolamo Arnaldi) by Marino Zabbia. Zabbia, Marino. *I notai e la cronachistica cittadina italiana...*; Beneš, Carrie E. *Urban Legends...*

55. *Le cronache di Todi...*

56. Zabbia, Marino. "Notariato e memoria storica. Le scritture storiografiche notarili nelle città dell'Italia settentrionale (secc. XII-XIV)". *Bullettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano*, 97 (1991): 75-122, especially, 76-85.

57. Alberti Millioli notarii regini. "Liber de temporibus et aetatibus et cronica imperatorum", *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores (in Folio)*, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger. Hannover: Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1903: XXXI, 336-668.



but his work is a clear witness of how a notary had already assumed the universal approach to history typical of religious authors.⁵⁸

More or less at the same time, the notary Riccobaldo da Ferrara devoted himself to several historical works based on classic tradition, usually composed in a universal imperial-papal frame. The *Chronica parva ferrarienses*, instead, follows the recent history of Riccobaldo's city, but the first section of the text traces a rich introduction to the Roman past of Ferrara: even if the author is not able to find a clear testimony for an ancient foundation of the city.⁵⁹

At the end of the 13th century the religious model of the municipal chroniclers was very clear. For the mendicant friars, history should be told as a great *Chronicon universale*, a history of human Salvation from the Creation to the present, looking for the last *Parousia*. Best examples of such a universal history were the *Speculum historiale* of Vincenzo di Beauvais and the *Chronicon* of Martino di Troppau (*Martinus Polonus*).⁶⁰

Once involved in a municipal context, the historical attitude of the friars turned into a deeper attention to local history. A simple composition of local and universal history, as already attempted by Maragone or Sicardus of Cremona was not enough, considering the grade of public involvement of friars and notaries. The aim was now to put the city into a universal history.⁶¹

Notaries were very able to adapt the universal history to the municipal context. Petrus Bonfante, a Florentine notary, translated the work of Martino Polono into vernacular: the translation, made in 1279, was the first Florentine historical work *in volgare*. Its importance, however, lies not only in its language, because Petrus Bonfante used the text as a universal frame where he put some explicit references to the particular history of Florence.⁶² The universalistic attitude of mendicant history was now converted into a municipal subject. A few years later, the dominican Tolomeus of Lucca wrote his *Annales lucenses*, following the Florentine and Lucchese

58. *L'uso in proprio della cronaca universale, diffusa del resto, ma non inventata dai Mendicanti...* ("The improper use of the universal chronic, widespread but not invented by mendicants"). See: Capo, Lidia. "Cronache mendicanti e cronache cittadine". *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen-Age, Temps Modernes*, 89/2 (1977): 633-639, especially 635.

59. Riccobaldo da Ferrara. *Chronica parva ferrariensis*, ed. Gabriele Zanella. Ferrara: Deputazione provinciale ferrarese di storia patria, 1983.

60. Martinus Polonus. "Chronicon", *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores (in Folio)*, ed. Ludwig Weiland. Hannover: Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1872: XXII, 377-482.

61. *La storia dell'incontro e dei complessi rapporti fra annalistica cittadina e manualistica enciclopedica dei frati mendicanti è praticamente tutta da fare* ("The history of the encounter and the complex relations between the town's annals and the mendicant's encyclopedic works is really all to be done"). Arnaldi, Girolama. "Andrea Dandolo doge-cronista", *La storiografia veneziana fino al secolo XVI. Aspetti e problemi*, Agostino Pertusi, ed. Florence: Olschki, 1970: 127-268, especially, 179-180.

62. Zabbia, Marino. "Prima del Villani. Note sulle cronache universali a Firenze tra l'ultimo quarto del Duecento e i primi anni del Trecento", *Le scritture della storia. Pagine offerte dalla Scuola nazionale di studi medievali a Massimo Miglio*, Fluvio Delle Donne, Giovanni Pesiri, eds. Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 2012: 139-162 (142-149); Santini, Pietro. *Quesiti e ricerche di storiografia fiorentina*. Florence: B. Seeber, 1903: 27-35 and Appendix II (second edition: Rome, Multigrafica Editrice, 1972).



Annales on one side, and Martino Polono on the other.⁶³ The early 14th century chronicles of Pisa trace the same evolution.⁶⁴

In northern Italy, among the *signorie* of Lombardy and Veneto, the evolution was quite similar. Here, the major character is the notary Benzo d'Alessandria, famous for his great knowledge of the classics, who lived at the court of the Della Scala family. Benzo composed a huge *Chronicon* since the Creation of the world. It was a Chronicle similar to the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincentius of Beauvais: not properly a narrative, rather an Encyclopedia of the entire culture in the shape of history.⁶⁵ In other words, a perfect "mendicant" work: indeed some of the first scholars who read the manuscript in 20th century believed Benzo himself to be a cleric. His approach to history reminds us of Giovanni Colonna and his *Mare historiarum*, or the dominican Domenico di Bandino d'Arezzo, author of the *Fons memorabilium universi*. One of the sections of the *Chronicon*, the book XIV, is devoted to the Italian cities. Benzo's chapters, much more detailed for northern Italy centres—that he knew intimately—are small essays of the origin and remote antiquities of each city. Benzo is often critical of the strange legends usually included in municipal traditions: his classical culture is in a sense a shield against the more fabulous inventions of 'incredible origins'. But in any case, the *Chronicon* was a great repository of historical material, available for a 'global' municipal history,⁶⁶ as a collection of antiquities to be used in each case. Giovanni da Cermenate, and some years later the dominican Galvano Fiamma, followed this kind of use.

In conclusion, the great municipal history of the 14th century depends on the universalism of religious history, mixed with the classical culture of the notaries. The turning point of this new history marks the beginning of the flowering of municipal chronicles. The most famous case is the *Nova Cronica* of Giovanni Villani: a universal-Florentine chronicle written as a mixture of universal history, legends of origins and a detailed narrative of recent times.

But Giovanni Villani is only the most famous case. The *Annales Cesenatenses*, composed in 1334, were written as a copy of a 13th century *Cronica antiqua*; but the author of the *Annales* added to his source, as a prologue, some Latin verses *de situ et laude civitatis*.⁶⁷ A few years previously a similar addition can be seen for Ogerio Alfieri

63. Tolomeus de Lucca. "Annales lucenses", *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, Nova series*. Berlin: Weidmannos, 1930: VIII.

64. Banti, Ottavio. "Studio sulla genesi...": 279-292.

65. The *Chronicon* has never been published as a whole. On the biography of the author see now: Petoletti, Marco. *Il "Chronicon" di Benzo d'Alessandria e i classici latini all'inizio del XIV secolo. Edizione critica del libro XXIV: "De moribus et vita philosophorum"*. Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2000: 3-21.

66. Joseph Berrigan publishes a long section of the work concerning the Italian cities (Berrigan, Joseph R. "Benzo d'Alessandria and the cities of Northern Italy". *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 4 (1967): 127-192). Benzo had a large influence on the 14th century chroniclers in Lombardy, but he was forgotten in following century; his work was re-discovered many centuries later. Ferrai, Luigi Alberto. "Benzo d'Alessandria e i cronisti milanesi del secolo XIV". *Bullettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano*, 7 (1889): 97-137.

67. *Annales Cesenates*, ed. Enrico Angiolini. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 2003: 1-2 (*Fonti per la Storia d'Italia Medievale, Antiquitates*, 21).



(death in 1294) and his *History of Asti*. He probably used a communal chronicle since 1070, but with a few chapters as a foreword, on the origin of Asti in Celtic Italy in 372 *ab urbe condita*, on the life and death of the municipal patron Saint Secondo, and the destruction of the city after the Lombard conquest.⁶⁸ The prologue, therefore, composed the official history of the city with its origin and antiquities.

4.2 Humanistic beginnings

Our last question concerns the relevance of humanistic thought for the historical practice of municipal chronicles. What does humanism mean for municipal chroniclers? It depends, first of all, on what we mean by 'humanism'. In a first sense, a general knowledge of classical works and a sharp interest for anything that was considered to be Roman, was probably present during the period of the great 'global' chronicles, from Lovato Lovati to Benzo d'Alessandria. In this sense, to broaden the range of ancient sources and texts did not implicate a radical change of approach towards the municipal origins and antiquities. On the contrary, it was a chance to find out new testimonies for a glorious past of the city itself. During the 15th century the anonymous author of the *Chronicum Forumlivii* used a former version of communal *Annales* (now lost): a typical communal narrative starting from the micro-local events of the 11th century. But the humanistic interest of the author forced him to go back to the classical sources, in search of the Roman origin of the earliest *Forum Livii*. The prologue gives a justification of such an antiquarian addition:

*Non inutile forte opus legentibus videbitur, cum porro rem pervetustam nequaquam omnino divulgatam agredi videar, que nec satis etiam ex monimentis litterarum priscorum auctorum, nec ex annalibus ab aliquibus iampridem illustrata, vel aliis dignis memoriis per aliqua tempora recensita fore aperte dignoscitur; tanta namque fuit ignavia nostrorum veterum ingeniorum cum ingratitude patrie aliorum gestorum plura scribentium et sua silentio labi permittentium.*⁶⁹

Humanistic culture in this sense enhanced the need of an ancient past in municipal chronicles. Moreover, in the late 15th century, the strange works of Annio da Viterbo, a skillful creator of historical legends and pretended ancient sources, gave a new impulse to the creation of local legendary traditions. Many municipal legends of Italian cities date back exactly to the inventions of Annio.⁷⁰

68. *Gli antichi cronisti astesi* Ogerio Alfieri, Guglielmo Ventura e Secondino Ventura, eds. Natale Ferro, Elio Arlieri, Osvaldo Campassi, Giuseppe Tartaglino. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 1990: 1-5. The *Ystoria civitatis Astensis* was included in the *liber iurium* of the city during the 14th century: *Codex Astensis qui de Malabayla communiter nuncupatur*, ed. Quintino Sella. Rome: Salviucci, 1880-1887: II, 57-60.

69. *Annales Forolivienses ab origine urbis usque ad annum MCCCCLXXIII*, ed. Giuseppe Mazzatinti. Città di Castello: Tipi dell'editore S. Lapi, 1903 (*Rerum italicarum scriptores; raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, XXII.2).

70. Fubini, Riccardo. *Storiografia dell'umanesimo in Italia da Leonardo Bruni ad Annio da Viterbo*. Rome: Storia e Letteratura, 2003: 291-342. On the contribution of the Humanism to our subject, see now:



On the other side, the humanistic culture introduced in historical practice a critical attitude towards the sources and method of historical writings. This is true primarily for the Florentine humanists, such as the pupils of Coluccio Salutati, Leonardo Bruni and Poggio Bracciolini. Bruni, for example, devoted many pages of his work to a severe revision of the legendary narratives about the origins of Florence.⁷¹ Through the humanistic analysis of the Roman sources, Bruni was able to reject the traditional images of the origins, and even their most important author, Giovanni Villani. At the same time in Genoa the humanist and chancellor Giovanni Stella followed the example of the early Florentine humanists; in his *History of Genoa*, Stella rejected the narratives of Jacopo da Varazze on the origins of the city as inventions devoid of any credibility.⁷²

But in a more general consideration, it would be a mistake to suppose that humanistic historical writings were going to build a 'modern' approach to history, based on a critical evaluation of the sources. Humanistic historians were no less involved in their political context than their medieval predecessors.

Coluccio Salutati himself, the father of the first generation of Florentine humanists, was the chancellor of the Florentine republic in 1375-1406. In his works and public letters, he very often used ancient examples to justify the Florentine politics against its enemies. During the war against the papacy in 1376-1378, he tried to gain the alliance of several cities of the papal state. In a letter to the commune of Ancona, he went back to the ancient sources on the origin of the city, founded by the Greek colons from Syracuse in 4th century BC:

*Momentote maiores vestros illos unquam, qui vobis urbem tam magnificam condiderunt, quod et olim inter nobiles totius Latii civitates fuit habita celebris et adhuc hodierno tempore non parvo lumine multas excedit, de Sicilia servitutem grecorum fugientes preparata classe viriliter aufugisse seu, ut quidam auctores non ignobiles volunt, de grecorum finibus advenisse solum libertatis studio servitutem simul cum patria relinquentes [...].*⁷³

In this case it was not an 'incredible origin': Ancona was really a Greek foundation. But the way Coluccio told the story was very far from being a neutral approach to the past. The sources were different, the skill of managing Latin texts was deeply improved, but the political use of the past remained the very centre of the question of origins in urban context. Humanism did not cancel, rather increased the importance of the past as the foundation of the political identities.

Callard, Caroline; Crouzet-Pavon, Élisabeth; Tallon, Alain, dirs. *La Politique de l'histoire en Italie. Arts et pratiques du réemploi (XIV-XVII^e siècle)*. Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2014.

71. On humanistic historiography see: Ianziti, Gary. *Writing History in Renaissance Italy. Leonardo Bruni and the Uses of the Past*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 2012.

72. Villard, Renaud. "Le héros introuvable...": 5-24.

73. Langkabel, Hermann. *Die Staatsbriefe Coluccio Salutatis. Untersuchungen zum Frühhumanismus in der Florentiner Staatskanzlei und Auswahlédition*. Köln-Wien: Böhlau, 1981: 112-113.



THE IDENTITY OF THE URBAN ‘COMMONERS’ IN 13TH CENTURY FLANDERS

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ABSTRACT

This article studies the social protest of the 1280s in the main cities of the county of Flanders. The protestors were a very heterogeneous group, because wealthy tradesmen, craftsmen and middle class artisans united forces to fight their common enemy, the established families that had governed the cities for many decades. The protestors had a shared, distinct and insistent identity. They presented themselves as the *meentucht*, a vernacular translation (or better: a contemporary interpretation) of the Latin *communitas*. The use of this term as a basis for their self-definition justified their protest because the rebels saw themselves as the true commoners of the city.

KEYWORDS

Political History, City, Medieval Flanders, Identity.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Historia Politica, Civitas, Flanders Mediaevalis, Identitas.

The history of rebellion and political conflict fascinates medievalists. The thrilling stories of bellicose Jacques, ransacking Ciompi and murdering peasants in the English countryside in 1381 attract amateurs and scholars of history alike. The same is true for the medieval history of the Low Countries. Historians have extensively examined the numerous revolts and political conflicts that took place in present-day Belgium and the Netherlands between *circa* 1280 and *circa* 1580. As they have shown, this densely populated region, which consisted of many small principalities and wealthy cities, faced violent conflict between powerful factions, fighting amongst the elite, uprisings of craft guilds, struggles between artisans, and so on. In his study of the moral and political society of Brabant and Flanders, the main principalities of the Low Countries, the nineteenth-century historian Léon Vanderkindere even described the Low Countries as *le paradis des luttes sociales*.¹ As a result, historians have at their disposal many publications covering who rebelled in the prosperous cities of the Low Countries, when they did it, and why; what rebels did and said; and if they succeeded in changing policies, or not.² However, the scholar who searches for a work on the identity of these people rapidly becomes disappointed. Most of the existing literature on urban identity in the Low Countries deals with the identity of an entire city, or the identity of the population of a particular region, while a study on the self-representation and distinctive characteristics of subordinate urban groups has yet to be written.³ In this article, I will provide an initial, tentative approach to this topic and also raise many new questions.

Much depends, of course, on what is meant by 'identity'. Even though there are a number of works which define and specify the term 'identity' and its use, scholars still do not agree on the exact definition of this concept. Some scholars, such as the American sociologist and follower of Bourdieu, Roger Brubaker, even claim to have excluded this term from their analysis, because it is vague and inherently contradictory. He argues that, in its focus on the connections between people and their similarities, 'identity' refers to the fundamental similitude of a group of people. At the same time, 'identity' points to the uniqueness and collective 'selfhood' of a people, because it concentrates on aspects that distinguish individuals or groups from

1. "the paradise of social struggles". Mollat, Michel; Wolff, Philippe. *Ongles bleus, Jacques et Ciompi. Les révolutions populaires en Europe aux XIVe et XVe siècles*. Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1970: 126 (quoting: Vanderkindere, Léon. *Le siècle des Artevelde. Etudes sur la civilisation morale et politique de la Flandre et du Brabant*. Brussels: Lebègue, 1879).

2. Dumolyn, Jan; Haemers, Jelle. "Patterns of urban rebellion in medieval Flanders". *Journal of Medieval History*, 31 (2005): 369-393; Cohn, Samuel Jr. *Lust for liberty. The politics of social revolt in medieval Europe, 1200-1425. Italy, France, and Flanders*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 2006; Boone, Marc. "The Dutch Revolt and the medieval tradition of urban dissent". *Journal of Early Modern History*, 11 (2007): 351-375; Arnade, Peter. *Beggars, iconoclasts, and civic patriots. The political culture of the Dutch Revolt*. London: Cornell, 2008; Dumolyn, Jan; Haemers, Jelle, "'A bad chicken was brooding.' Subversive speech in late medieval Flanders". *Past and Present*, 214 (2012): 45-86; Lantschner, Patrick. "Revolts and the political order of cities in the late Middle Ages". *Past and Present*, 225 (2014): 3-46.

3. Boone, Marc; Stabel, Peter, eds. *Shaping urban identity in late medieval Europe*. Leuven: Garant, 2000; Stein Robert; Pollmann, Judith, eds. *Networks, regions and nation. Shaping identities in the Low Countries, 1300-1650*. Leiden: Brill, 2010; Soen, Violet; Junot, Yves; Mariage, Florian, eds. *L'identité au pluriel. Jeux et enjeux d'appartenances autour des anciens Pays-Bas, XIVe-XVIIIe siècles*. Lille: Revue du Nord, 2014.



each other.⁴ To overcome this ambiguous word 'identity', Brubaker advises focusing research on less congested categories of thought, such as peoples' identification and self-categorization, commonality and connectedness, or self-understanding and social location. Following Brubaker's advice, I will focus on one specific aspect of the research on identity. I will use this term to refer to the perception people have of themselves. Although I am well aware that reconstructing peoples' self-portraits is only one of several optional approaches to (the history of) their identity, it is, in my view, necessary if we are to understand their distinctiveness. In short, the 'self-understanding' of social protesters in the late medieval town, the focus of this article, refers to the practical sense that people had of themselves and their social world.⁵

Medievalists rarely find sources which give insight into the individual self-consciousness of citizens, because rebels have left us only those documents in which they collectively expressed claims. They give us insight in the insurgents' 'collective identity', which is above all a communicative construct or a 'discursive fact'. This means that collective identities are expressed in a group's qualitative description, formulated by the consensus of the group. Consequently, a study of the 'self-portrait of a group' (or better yet: the self-painted 'group portrait') must focus on a close empirical reading of the relevant features of the relationship between people and their surrounding world.⁶ To explore the identity of social protesters in the Flemish cities, it would be worthwhile to investigate the names they gave themselves in their uprisings. Historians typically use 'anonymous' terms, such as the 'crowd', the 'mob', or the 'poor', to describe rebels. In this article, I will look at the terms rebels used to represent themselves to the people whose rule they contested. This requires finding documents written by the social protesters, which is not an easy task.

It has long been recognized that we cannot use chronicles and repressive documents to study the identity of these people. Such texts usually describe rebels in negative terms, because in them, the elite writers were trying to legitimise their repression of the uprisings by their Maecenas. For example, French chronicles, written at the courts of the counts of Flanders, the dukes of Burgundy, or the kings of France, used words such as *chiens esragiés* (Jean Froissart), *bestes* (Philippe de Commynes), *rudes crueux sattelittes de tres basse condition* (Jean Molinet) to describe Flemish rebels.⁷ Documents written by the social protesters themselves are harder to find, because these city dwellers were often illiterate. If they did write documents, the authorities usually destroyed them during the repression phase. However, city subjects sometimes wrote documents such

4. Brubaker, Roger. *Ethnicity without groups*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 2004: 28-63; Hoppenbrouwers, Peter. "The dynamics of national identity in the later Middle Ages", *Networks, regions and nation. Shaping identities in the Low Countries, 1300-1650*, Robert Stein, Judith Pollmann, eds. Leiden: Brill, 2010: 32-33.

5. Brubaker, Roger. *Ethnicity without groups...*: 44; Bourdieu, Pierre. *Le sens pratique*. Paris: Minuit, 1980.

6. Straub, Jürgen. "Personal and collective identity: a conceptual analysis", *Identities. Time, difference and boundaries*, Heidrun Friese, ed. New York: Berghahn, 2002: 71-72; Hunt, Scott; Benford, Robert. "Collective identity, solidarity, and commitment", *The Blackwell companion to social movements*, David Snow, Sarah Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003: 433-457.

7. Dumolyn, Jan. "Le povre peuple estoit moult opprimé: elite discourses on 'the people' in the Burgundian Netherlands (fourteenth to fifteenth centuries)". *French History*, 23 (2009): 175.



as petitions (also called *requêtes*, *Suppliken*, *gravamina*, etc.). These documents were written versions of specific complaints about governmental policies which had been presented orally to the authorities. Everywhere in late medieval Europe, but especially in the cities, subjects composed such texts. While the petition writers occasionally succeeded in influencing the town's decision-making process, usually they were not effective. Even though the documents were often lost or destroyed if the movement failed, large numbers of petitions survive in some cases. The plethora of recently published overviews and studies of petitions show how fruitful the research on these documents can be for the history of subordinate groups.⁸

Petitions have not been widely used by scholars who study the political history of the Low Countries, because these documents survive only in a few cases. However, there are documents in which subjects complained about their rulers' government available from the very beginning of the 'rebellious period' of the history of the Low Countries (which started in the 13th century and ended in the 16th). In the 1280s particularly, urban dwellers in the county of Flanders protested against the exercise and abuse of power by their rulers. The surviving documents are useful sources for the identity of 'rebels', because they are the oldest known texts written by subordinate groups in the Low Countries. Though most of these texts were studied by historians during the twentieth century, their language and discursive context have not yet been analyzed in detail. The analysis below intends to scrutinize the discursive construction the text composers used to present themselves in order to legitimise their protest. Therefore, this article concentrates on the identity of the *ghemeente*, the term that the 'commoners' of the Flemish cities used to portray themselves. It will show that these people cleverly used existing discursive registers of political thought to express their wishes, while they subverted the meaning of words used by the town's elite with the aim of legitimising their expressions. This talented use of language may explain the success of the instigators' collective actions in the 13th century, although it must be remembered that the town rulers could not ignore the social and economic power, and therefore the military potential, of these people.

1. The 1280s in the Low Countries

In the 1280s, the Low Countries entered a new phase of their political history, the stage of 'civic emancipation'.⁹ In the first phase of 'communal emancipation',

8. Millet, Hélène, ed. *Suppliques et requêtes. Le gouvernement par la grâce en Occident (XIIe-XVe siècle)*. Rome: École française de Rome, 2003; Nubola, Cecilia; Würzler, Andreas, eds. *Bitschriften und Gravamina. Politik, Verwaltung und Justiz in Europa (14.-18. Jahrhundert)*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2005; Ormrod, Mark; Dodd, Gwilym; Musson, Anthony, eds. *Medieval petitions: grace and grievance*. Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2009.

9. Dumolyn, Jan; Haemers, Jelle. "Patterns of urban rebellion...": 375-378; Boone, Marc. "Le comté de Flandre dans le long XIVe siècle: une société urbanisée face aux crises du bas Moyen Age", *Rivolte urbane e rivolte contadine nell'Europa del Trecento: un confronto*, Monique Bourin, Giovanni Cherubini, Giuliano Pinto, eds. Florence: Firenze University Press, 2008: 17-47.



begun in the 12th century, the Flemish cities became relatively independent from ecclesiastical and territorial powers. In the 1120s, Ghent, Bruges, Ypres, Lille and other cities had successfully fought for political recognition from the count of Flanders and his sovereign, the French king. The cities gained political privileges which made its elite, mostly prosperous merchants, a politically autonomous power in the county. As in the Italian city-states, the ruling urban families not only governed the city, but also the surrounding countryside, while noble power declined. In the cities, these families owned large blocks of land on which less privileged town dwellers worked and lived. As elsewhere in Europe, the cities were governed as a 'commune'. In practice, this meant that the leading families ruled the city by common consent among themselves, without interference from the count, or the lower social strata.¹⁰ These lower groups, however, became politically important during the first half of the 13th century. Economic growth in these decades, when Flanders was at the crossroads of international trade between the Baltic and Mediterranean Seas, allowed many skilled labourers and middle class merchants to accumulate wealth. In the mid-13th century, they started to organize themselves in religious confraternities. The urban elite was still able to control these subordinate groups by establishing, and then leading, the resulting corporative organisations. But in the decades that followed, the leading city merchants could no longer keep the lower classes from fighting for political recognition. The phase of these groups' 'social emancipation' had arrived.

The same struggle, sharing similar characteristics, broke out in different areas all over Western Europe. Between 1245 and 1320, the towns in Northern France, Brabant and Flanders proved to be a real seedbed for social turmoil.¹¹ Petty commodity producers in the craft-guilds formed a new kind of middle class, distinct from both the patrician families who had monopolised politics in the past, and the unorganised lower-class proletarians and marginal groups. In 1245, the first strikes (called *takehans*) took place in Douai, and were repeated in 1276.¹² In 1252 and 1274-5, the textile workers of Ghent went on strike. In 1275, a group of protesters even succeeded in overthrowing the existing Ghent city government and electing a new board of aldermen, though two years later the ruling families (called the 'patricians' in the historiography) managed to regain control over urban institutions. In 1280, a general revolt of labourers spread across the county. Disruptions of international trade, such as the interruption of the English wool trade in the 1270s, could provoke merchants into joining rebellions. Scholars have described revolts in Tournai in

10. Watts, John. *The making of polities. Europe, 1300-1500*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2009: 98-99.

11. Leguai, André. "Les troubles urbains dans le Nord de la France à la fin du XIII^e et au début du XIV^e siècle". *Revue d'Histoire Economique et Sociale*, 54 (1976): 281.

12. Espinas, Georges. *La vie urbaine de Douai au Moyen Age*. Paris: Colin, 1913: I, 226-269; Boone, Marc. "Social conflicts in the cloth industry of Ypres (late 13th-early 14th centuries): the Cockerulle reconsidered", *Ypres and the medieval cloth industry in Flanders. Archaeological and historical contributions*, Marc Dewilde, Alexis Wielemans, Anton Ervynck, eds. Doornveld: Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium, 1998: 147-155; Bardoel, Agatha. "The urban uprising at Bruges, 1280-81. Some new findings about the rebels and the partisans". *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, 72 (1994): 761-791.



1279-1281, Saint Omer in 1280-1283, Ghent in 1280, the *Cockerulle* in Ypres in 1281 and the *Moerlemaye* in Bruges in 1280-81. While each of the 1280s rebellions had its distinctive features, the general recession in commerce and industry explains why they occurred simultaneously. The key to understanding this massive wave of revolts lies in examining the infringements to the social, economic, and political position of ordinary craftsmen—and peasants, as rural revolts broke out also in these years¹³—coming from multiple directions and intensifying in the final decades of the 13th century.

The study of the petitions urban rebels presented to their city government, or to (representatives of) the count in these conflicts sheds light on the rebels' social background and demands. As elsewhere the protests of the late 1200s were led by a conglomeration of people, mainly connected by collective protest against the regime's abuse of power.¹⁴ Local conditions, such as the existence of craftsmen or frustrated tradesmen who had been excluded from power, determined the precise social background of the protest. In Bruges and Ghent, for instance, the uprisings were led by *nouveaux riches*, though the majority of the protesters belonged to the craft guilds (some of which were still being formed).¹⁵ In both towns, factional divides within the urban elite gave rise to an alliance between one of the ostracized factions and craft groups, who were using the factional split within the urban elite to further their own political ends. In the end, however, the coalition between the wealthy tradesmen and the less powerful craftsmen disintegrated, as some of the 'frustrated families' were allowed into the urban government. Although the craftsmen did not obtain power, it would not be long before they rose up again. In the beginning of the 14th century, a general revolt of Flemish craftsmen broke out and continued until they obtained political rights following the Battle of the Golden Spurs (July 1302), a defeat for the patrician elite of the towns.¹⁶

Multipliciter sunt abusi, the Ghent commoners wrote to the French King Philip III on 7 November 1275.¹⁷ In this and many other petitions, their social protest strategically

13. Bavel, Bas van. "Rural revolts and structural change in the Low Countries, thirteenth – early fourteenth centuries", *Survival and discord in medieval society. Essays in honour of Christopher Dyer*, Richard Goddard, John Langdon, Miriam Muller, eds. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010: 249-268.

14. Gleba, Gudrun. *Die Gemeinde als alternatives Ordnungsmodell. Zur sozialen und politischen Differenzierung des Gemeindebegriffs in den innerstädtischen Auseinandersetzungen des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts*. Mainz, Magdeburg, München, Lübeck. Cologne: Böhlau, 1989: 257.

15. Wyffels, Carlos. "Nieuwe gegevens betreffende de 13de eeuwse 'demokratische' stedelijke opstand: de Brugse 'Moerlemaye' (1280-1281)". *Bulletin de la Commission Royale d'Histoire*, 132 (1966): 43; Martins, Renate. *Wertorientierungen und wirtschaftliches Erfolgsstreben mittelalterlicher Grosskaufleute. Das Beispiel Gent im 13. Jahrhundert*. Cologne: Böhlau, 1976. For Bruges, see also: Dumolyn, Jan; Haemers, Jelle. "Reclaiming the common sphere of the city. The revival of the Bruges commune in the late thirteenth century", *La légitimité implicite*, Jean-Philippe Genet, ed. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2015: II, 161-188.

16. Caenegem, Raoul van, ed. 1302. *Le désastre de Courtrai. Faits et mythes de la bataille des Eperons d'Or*. Antwerp: Mercator, 2002; Dumolyn Jan; Haemers, Jelle. "Patterns of urban rebellion...": 373-374.

17. Warnkönig, Leopold. *Flandrische Staats- und Rechtsgeschichte bis zum Jahr 1305*. Tübingen: Fues, 1836: II, 68. See also my case-study: Haemers, Jelle. "Révolte et requête. Les gens de métiers et les conflits sociaux dans les villes de Flandre (XIIIe-XVe siècle)". *Revue historique*, 677 (2016): 27-56.



targeted misbehaviour by political elites to complain about autocratic rule in the cities. Moreover, the petitions claimed that they were written in the general interests of everyone —*pro utilitate communi*— in the words of the Ghent document. A close reading of the demands of the 1280s social protest reveals that political questions were foremost in the rebels' petitions. As elsewhere in Europe, the spark that ignited the artisans' rebellion was fiscal, but the fact that anti-tax sentiments or concerns about fiscal mismanagement progressed rapidly to constitutional levels suggests that artisans were deeply concerned about issues that went beyond their pocketbooks to encompass the structure and maintenance of the community.¹⁸ Their principal desire was the restoration of communal harmony instead of familial and factional conflict.¹⁹ During the revolt, protestors pinpointed two objectionable practices: financial excesses, in the form of heavy taxation, exploitation of people's property and work, corruption, and similar abuses; and misgovernment, in the form of arbitrary policies, unfair judgments, improper use of coercion, violation of rights, and other malfeasance.²⁰ Rising taxes might often inflame people with anger in a difficult economic period, but as members of the commune who paid taxes to support its government, working citizens were more concerned that their commune be well-governed. Citizens denounced the unjust division and improper use of taxes by city oligarchs, not the taxes themselves. The taxes did weigh more heavily on those people who had the most meagre resources, which was a source of discontent. Going further, the rebels demanded direct control over city finances and urban policy through political representation. The period of turmoil ended only in 1302, after a number of craft guilds succeeded in winning the right of self-government and attaining political power in their cities. Indeed, in the end the revolts of the 1280s were successful, which explains why some documents from these conflicts were preserved and why they are studied intensively today.

Less thoroughly considered are the language these people employed to express their claims and the strategies they used to legitimize their demands in their redacted petitions. Before investigating the origins of the 'nomenclature of 13th century rebels', it is useful to review what existing research shows about language and strategies in later periods. As John Watts has shown for England, the meaning of words used to describe social groupings (such as the 'commons') changes over time, and probably over place as well. In 14th century England, 'commons' and 'commoners' referred to the entire urban community. By the 16th century, the meaning of these words had shifted to be increasingly associated with the lower

18. Farr, James. *Artisans in Europe, 1300-1914*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2000: 189.

19. Black, Antony. *Guilds and civil society in European political thought from the twelfth century to the present*. London: Methuen, 1984: 66-67.

20. Billen, Claire. "A la recherche d'un prélèvement fiscal équitable. Pratiques, discours et porte-parole dans les Pays-Bas méridionaux", *Fiscal systems in the European economy from the 13th to the 18th century*, Simona Cavaciocchi, ed. Florence: Firenze University Press, 2008: 871-880; Prevenier, Walter. "Conscience et perception de la condition sociale chez les gens du commun dans les anciens Pays-Bas des XIII^e et XIV^e siècles", *Le petit peuple dans l'Occident médiéval. Terminologies, perceptions, réalités*, Pierre Boglioni, Robert Delort, Claude Gauvard, eds. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2002: 177-189.



classes.²¹ So the terms ‘commonalty’ or *communitas*, which originally applied to the entire borough community, including mayor and aldermen, changed in meaning during the late 13th century; by the 14th century it was beginning to designate the mass of the citizens, as distinguished from the ruling body, or the so-called *probi homines* in the town.²² The same process happened in Flanders. In the 16th century *ghemeen* principally referred to the have-nots of urban society because it had become a term employed to describe radical rebels who formed the shock troops for the collective actions staged by the craft guilds. However, in 13th century Flanders, this term had a different meaning, although there was a discussion about its exact interpretation even in the 1280s. In Flemish towns different social groups used words like *communitas* and *ghemeen*, just as their counterparts in other areas of Europe called themselves *el pueblo comun*, *le commun*, and *die Gemeinde*.²³ So the historian must be cognizant of which social group is under examination if he wants to know what these words mean.

2. The nomenclature of *le commun* and *het ghemeen* in the 12th and 13th centuries

In 1275 and 1297, political protesters in Ghent called themselves *le coumun* or *le commun de Gant*.²⁴ In a letter of October 1280 sent to Robert of Béthune, son of the count of Flanders (as the count was in France, his son was the addressee), the Bruges ‘commoners’ presented themselves as the *meentucht*, *meintucht* or *meente*.²⁵ *Die ghemeente van den Damme*, a small port near Bruges, submitted another petition to Robert in 1280. In this document, the Damme protesters also used the term *ghemeentucht*. In 1299 the *mentucht* of Damme complained to the count about the abuse of power by the local bailiff Jan van den Stene.²⁶ Determining which social group composed these letters requires some analysis of these word choices. The middle Dutch words (*ghe*)meentucht and (*ghe*)meente, and the French term *commun* do not have the same literal meaning. While the word ‘commun’ is derived from

21. Watts, John. “The commons in medieval England”, *La légitimité implicite*, Jean-Philippe Genet, ed. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2015: II, 207-222.

22. Swanson, Heather. *Medieval Artisans: An urban class in medieval England*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989: 120.

23. Haemers, Jelle; Merlevede, Dries. “‘Le commun se esmeut’. Een onderzoek naar het politieke optreden van het ‘gemeen’ in het kader van de Gentse opstand (1379-1385)”. *Revue belge de Philologie et d’Histoire*, 88 (2010): 177-204.

24. See, respectively: Espinas, Georges; Pirenne, Henri. *Recueil de documents relatifs à l’histoire de l’industrie drapière en Flandre*. Brussels: Kiessling et Imbreghts, 1909: II, 382; Vuylsteke, Julius. *Uitleggingen tot de Gentsche stads- en baljuwsrekeningen, 1280-1315*. Gent: Vuylsteke, 1906: 78.

25. Wyffels, Carlos. “Nieuwe gegevens...”: 105.

26. See, respectively: Smet, Antoine de. “De klacht van de ‘Ghemeente’ van Damme in 1280”. *Bulletin de la Commission Royale d’Histoire*, 115 (1950): 9; Nowé, Henri. *Les baillis comtaux de Flandre: des origines à la fin du XIV^e siècle*. Brussels: Lamertin, 1929: 435.



the Latin *communio*, *ghemeente* on the contrary (with suffix *-te* or *-tucht*) is a literal translation of *communitas*. *Ghemeente* is closely related to the German term *Gemeinde*, which is an eight-century loan translation from the Latin word *communitas*.²⁷ The Germanic derivation of the words *ghemeente* (in Dutch) and *Gemeinde* (in German) is therefore based on a Latin original, just as the French, Spanish and Italian derivatives are. But what does it exactly mean? *Communio* can be divided into two parts, *com* and *munis*, and the same division applies to *gemeen* (*ge* and *meen*). The Dutch and the Latin word parts have similar meanings. *Com* and *ge* mean 'together'; *mein* and *munis* stand for 'contribution', 'tribute', or 'tax'.²⁸ As combinations, the words *communio* and *gemeen* refer to a tributary people, or, in a political context, to a people who pay taxes together. The suffix *-tucht* or *-te* in *ghemeente* or *meentucht* might be understood in a similar way. Although the precise meaning of this suffix is unclear, it likely involves regulating order and the maintenance of discipline within a group.²⁹ The suffix gives the word *meentucht* a political meaning, as it designates a distinct group of people with internal regulation, or better: a certain political authority.

The etymological origins of the word *gemeen* clarify why social protesters used it to identify themselves in their petitions of fiscal and political demands. The first use of the word in Dutch, at the beginning of the 13th century, strengthens this argument. Undoubtedly, the word *gemeen* was known before the 13th century, but vernacular texts on urban administrative affairs only begin to appear after 1200.³⁰ The term is first attested in the statutes of the Ghent lepers' house of 1236, though the text is clearly a translation from Latin. The statutes speak of *de gemene nutscepe* ("the common utility") of the house residents regarding their welfare. In 1260, the term *ghemeen* appears autonomously in an agreement to build dikes and drain a polder undertaken by the *ghemeenten van den lande* ("the communities of the land") in Saaftinghe. In the third quarter of the 13th century, a text used the *ghemente van Sente Pieters* to refer to a village community of those living nearby the powerful abbey of Saint Peter's in Ghent.³¹ These three records, the first uses of the word *gemeen* in Dutch, show that the term referred to a collectivity of people involved in

27. Olberg, Gabriele von. "Gemeinde", *Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde*, Rosemarie Müller, ed. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998: XI, 1-3; Dilcher, Gerhard. "Gemeinde". *Lexikon des Mittelalters*. Munich: LexMA-Verlag, 1989: IV, 1209-1211.

28. Philippa, Marlies; Debrabandere, Frans; Quak, Arend. *Etymologisch woordenboek van het Nederlands*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004; Vries, Matthias de; Winkel, Lammert te. *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*. The Hague: SDU, 1889, both under *gemeen*. The English word *common* has the same etymological origins, see: Kurath, Hans, ed. *Middle English Dictionary*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1959: II, 438-441; Klein, Ernest. *A comprehensive etymological dictionary of the English language*. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1966: 152.

29. Philippa, Marlies; Debrabandere, Frans; Quak, Arend. "Lemma tucht". *Etymologisch woordenboek van het Nederlands*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004.

30. Oostrom, Frits van. *Stemmen op schrift. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur vanaf het begin tot 1300*. Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2006: 225-232.

31. *Corpus van Middelnederlandse teksten (tot en met het jaar 1300)*, ed. Maurits Gysseling. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977: I, 21, 71, 291.



the administration of an economic concern, such as the management of a hospital, the government of lands protected by a dike system, or the rule of a village. Perhaps through representatives, the identified 'common' people collectively administered the group they belonged to, possibly by contributing financially to the collectivity. The word clearly was used on the countryside as well. Until the twentieth century, the word *gemeen* was connected to the common use of land in village communities and the government of *wateringen* on the coastal plain (i.e. the administration of lands enclosed by a dike system).³² At the regional level, the cities and the rural areas of Flanders collectively called themselves 'the common land' of Flanders (*gemene land*). Flemish subjects particularly used this term in their negotiations with the count in reference to payment of taxes and other political affairs.³³

In the 1280s, the composers of petitions might not have been aware of the etymological origins of the word *gemeen*, but they might have known about its historical roots (and, of course, these origins cannot be uncoupled). As historians know well, the word *communitas*, or 'commune', was a widely-used term to denote the privileged urban communities which obtained rights of self-government in different regions of Europe beginning in the 1100s. In the 12th century, inhabitants of port towns, embanked villages and fortified places in the northern regions of present-day France and Italy successfully fought for rights of political recognition. As the etymological origins of the word 'commune' indicate, these people had gained the right to govern themselves through the taxes they had formerly paid to lords, bishops and kings.³⁴ *Communitio* became a generic term for the people who lived in this privileged territory, generally labelled a *civitas*, inhabited by 'citizens' (*cives*), as Galbert of Bruges described the Flemish cities in his contemporary Latin chronicle.³⁵ Even though the long-lasting debate over the existence of such 'communes' in Flanders continues, descriptions of these cities' political characteristics in Galbert's chronicle and other sources are remarkably similar to their Italian and northern French counterparts. In the same way that urban citizens in these regions did, Flemish burghers enjoyed rights to govern, judge, and tax themselves without noticeable interference from the count. Is it a coincidence that citizens who wanted to end arbitrary justice and taxation at the end of 13th century used the same terminology

32. Hoppenbrouwers, Peter. "The use and management of commons in the Netherlands. An overview", *The Management of Common Land in North West Europe, c. 1500-1850*, Martina De Moor, Leigh Shaw-Taylor, Paul Warde, eds. Turnhout: Brepols, 2002: 87-109; Soens, Tim. *De spade in de dijk? Waterbeheer en rurale samenleving in de Vlaamse kustvlakte, 1280-1580*. Ghent: Academia Press, 2009: 23-25.

33. Prevenier, Walter. *De leden en de staten van Vlaanderen (1384-1405)*. Brussels: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten, 1961: 21.

34. Oexle, Otto. "Die Kultur der Rebellion. Schwureinung und Verschwörung im früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Okzident". *Ordnung und Aufruhr im Mittelalter. Historische und juristische Studien zur Rebellion*, Marie-Theresa Fögen, ed. Frankfurt-Main: Klostermann, 1995: 119-137; Schulz, Knut. *Denn sie lieben die Freiheit so sehr... Kommunale Aufstände und Entstehung des europäischen Bürgertums im Hochmittelalter*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992; Blickle, Peter. *Kommunalismus. Skizzen einer gesellschaftlichen Organisationsform*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 2000.

35. Galbert of Bruges. *De multro traditione et occisione gloriosi Karoli comitis Flandriae*, ed. Jeff Rider. Turnhout: Brepols, 1994. On the Flemish 'communes': Verhulst, Adriaan. *The Rise of Cities in North-Western Europe*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1999: 119-139.



(albeit in 'their language', the vernacular) as their predecessors in the 12th century had? The social protesters of the 1280s were not related by kinship to the leading *civitates* of the 12th century (for protesters were governed by the descendants of those leading families who had fought for political recognition in the 1120s), but as citizens with citizens' rights, they demanded political recognition and proper government of their city. These citizens seem to have tried to strengthen their claims and legitimize their arguments by using terms as *meente*, which harkened back to the 'communal phase' of their history.

Scholars of medieval communes have observed that leading families in the 13th and 14th century cities frequently used the terminology of the 'communal phase' of their history as a point of reference in the performance of their urban identity.³⁶ Even in later stages of their history tax-paying citizens, such as the *pecheros* in Castilian cities, called themselves the *común* when claiming rights of political participation.³⁷ In 13th century Flanders, it seems that not only the urban rulers but also subordinate groups effectively used 'communal terminology' to describe themselves. They claimed words such as *communitas* and 'community', albeit in 'their' language, the vernacular Dutch, while French was used in correspondence between urban rulers and the count, who spoke this 'language of culture' by preference. Furthermore, the use of *ghemeente* was a clever political strategy employed to justify the protest, as was the claim of the 'commoners' that they were acting for the 'common utility' of every townsman. A Ghent document of 1275, for instance, tells its readers that the commoners acted *por le profit et por le preu dou coumun*.³⁸ Walter Prevenier and others have shown that concepts such as 'common good', and *utilitas publicas* were meaningless clichés during the entire Middle Ages, deployed by both rulers and ruled to justify their political actions.³⁹ The vague connotations of these phrases might explain their popularity, but in Prevenier's view (and I agree), the slogan 'for the common good' was a mobilising device, employed to convince bystanders that a contention was legitimate. The 'commoners' of the 1280s used discourse on the common good mainly to distinguish themselves from the urban administration, which they depicted as a selfish regime serving the interests of the ruling families. Moreover, the terms *ghemeente* and *meentucht* not only gave the protest much-needed

36. Chittolini, Giorgio; Johanek, Peter, eds. *Aspekte und Komponenten der städtischen Identität in Italien und Deutschland (14-16 Jahrhundert)*. Berlin: Dunker & Humblot, 2003; Gilli, Patrick; Salvatori, Enrica, eds. *Les identités urbaines au Moyen Âge. Regards sur les villes du Midi français*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2014.

37. Sánchez León, Pablo. "Changing patterns of urban conflict in late medieval Castile", *Rodney Hilton's Middle Ages. An exploration of historical themes*, Chris Dyer, Peter Coss, Chris Wickham, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007: 226 (*Past and Present Supplement 2*); Naegle, Gisela; Solórzano, Jesús. "Geschlechter und Zünfte, principales und común. Städtische Konflikte in Kastilien und dem spätmittelalterlichen Reich". *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung*, 41 (2014): 574-575.

38. Espinas, Georges; Pirenne, Henri. *Recueil de documents...*: II, 383.

39. Prevenier, Walter. "Utilitas communis in the Low Countries (13th-15th centuries): from social mobilisation to legitimation of power", *De Bono Communi. The discourse and practice of the common good in the European city, 13th-16th centuries*, Elodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, Anne-Laure Van Bruaene, eds. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010: 216; Blickle, Peter. "Der Gemeine Nutzen. Ein kommunaler Wert und seine politische Karriere", *Gemeinwohl und Gemeinsinn. Historische Semantiken politischer Leitbegriffe*, Herfried Münkler, Harald Bluhm, eds. Berlin: Oldenbourg, 2002: 85-107.



authority, but also conveyed a special political meaning. The protesters presented themselves as the true heirs of the 12th-century commune, rightfully—in their eye—claiming that the city should be well-governed. Using *ghemeente* gave those who challenged the regime a certain political authority and juridical legitimacy.⁴⁰ By intensive deployment of this terminology the protestors made clear that they did not want to overthrow the urban government. Although they may have intended the opposite, repeating that they were only interested in seeing that the privileges of the town were respected offered bystanders and higher authorities legitimate, respectable reasons to listen to the protestors. This 13th century use of the concept of the ‘commune’ is reminiscent of battle-cries, “*Wyth kynge Richarde and with the trew communes*” and “*Communitatis!*”, shouted by the English rebels in 1381,⁴¹ and of the cry *Wir sind das Volk* in the East German protests of 1989. In these collective actions, as in the 1280s, protesters claimed that they were the only true state of the realm, a shared characteristic at the core of their message and their identity.

3. ‘Elite’ vs. ‘popular’ discourses on social distinction within the city?

It is interesting to compare the language of the petitions from the ‘commoners’ with the discourse of social distinction used in elitist texts, such as chronicles written by clerics. Was there a difference in their descriptions of social distinction within the city? The narratives of many clerics justified the rule of towns by the *meliores* or *majores*, who faced continuous threat from the urban *minores*. This simplified black-and-white division of urban social composition was commonly employed by chroniclers composing social histories of the 12th-century communes. Italian chronicles spoke of the *popolo grasso* and *popolo minuto* to refer to the subordinate population (or the *popolani*).⁴² The word *populus* meant the total population of a town in classical Roman classical texts, and was similarly used by medieval chroniclers. Galbert of Bruges, for example, used the term *populus* in his descriptions of the inhabitants of Ghent and Bruges.⁴³ Following Roman tradition, Isidore of

40. Gleba, Gudrun. *Die Gemeinde...*: 257; Barth, Reinhard. *Argumentation und Selbstverständnis der Bürgeropposition in städtischen Auseinandersetzungen des Spätmittelalters. Lübeck 1403-1408, Braunschweig 1374-1376, Mainz 1444-1446, Cologne 1396-1400*. Cologne: Böhlau, 1974: 348.

41. Strohm, Paul. *Hochon's arrow. The social imagination of fourteenth-century texts*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992: 41.

42. Zey, Claudia. “Autour des soulèvements communaux en Italie septentrionale et centrale aux XI^e et XII^e siècles”, *Révolte et statut social de l'Antiquité tardive aux Temps modernes*, Philippe Depreux, ed. Munich: Oldenbourg, 2008: 131-147; Zorzi, Andrea. “The Popolo”, *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance*, John Najemy, ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004: 145-164; Crouzet-Pavan, Élisabeth. *Enfers et paradis. L'Italie de Dante et de Giotto*. Paris: Albin Michel, 2001: 132-135; Poloni, Alma. *Potere al popolo. Conflitti sociali e lotte politiche nell'Italia comunale del Duecento*. Milan: Bruno Mondadori, 2010; Judde de Larivière, Claire; Salzberg, Rosa. “‘Le peuple est la cité’. L'idée de popolo et la condition des popolani à Venise (XV^e-XVI^e siècles)”. *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 68 (2013): 1113-1140.

43. Galbert of Bruges. *De multro traditione...*: 95, 102. On the Roman use of *populus*: Hornblower, Simon; Spawforth, Antony, eds. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996: 1224.



Seville and the so-called *Decretum Gratiani* (a collection of canonical law) divided the *populus* into the *maiores* and the *plebs*.⁴⁴ Some chroniclers added an economic interpretation to these vague political categories, by dividing the social world of the cities into the dichotomous categories of 'rich' and 'poor' citizens.⁴⁵ Predictably, none of them sympathized with social protest. Those who questioned or disturbed the existing social order were seen as devilish fiends, or animals who instinctively reacted to irrational impulses. This tendency to 'pathologise' or even animalise political resistance appeared in Galbert's chronicle, when he denounced the popular protest of the *minores* as harmful to the total community.⁴⁶

As the social composition of towns diversified over the course of the 13th century, the terminology deployed to describe urban inhabitants diversified as well. In an era of growing social protest in Europe, Thomas Aquinas wrote in his *Summa Theologica* (circa 1270) about three categories of citizens: *supremi* or *optimates* (comparable to the Roman patricians), the *medii* or *populus honorabilis* (a new category of 'middle groups'), and the *infimi*, or *vilis populus* (those at the bottom of the social ladder).⁴⁷ Chroniclers of the Low Countries used a parallel discourse. In his description of the 1307 revolt of the commoners in Tournai, the cleric Gillis li Muisis distinguished the *magnis* who ruled the city (the *civitas*), or the *gubernatores, cives et majores civitates* (this is the so-called *major pars* of the citizens) who administered the *communio*, on one side. On the other, there were *mediocribus* and *parvis* who had to be controlled by their rulers lest the city fall into disorder.⁴⁸ In 1316, Abbot Jacob of Muevin divided the Flemish population into *potentes, nobiles, divites, mediocres et pauperes*, with the latter three categories designating townsmen.⁴⁹ It seems that chroniclers were well aware of urban social diversity, and that most of them sympathized with the urban elite (from which they often came). This tendency and terminology was reproduced

44. See: Isidori Hispalensis. "Etymologiarum Sive Originum Liber V, chapter 10". *The Latin Library*. 24 June 2014 <<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/isidore/5.shtml>>; *Decretum Magistri Gratiani*, ed. Emil Friedberg. Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1879 (vol. I, 2, 1, 3). See also: Reynolds, Susan. "Medieval 'Origines Gentium' and the Community of the Realm". *History*, 68 (1983): 375-390.

45. Ehbrecht, Wilfried. "Zu Ordnung und Selbstverständnis städtischer Gesellschaft im späten Mittelalter". *Blätter für deutsche Landesgeschichte*, 110 (1974): 83-103; Bosl, Karl. "Potens und Pauper. Begriffsgeschichtliche Studien zur gesellschaftlichen Differenzierung im frühen Mittelalter und zum 'Pauperismus' des Hochmittelalters", *Alteuropa und die moderne Gesellschaft. Festschrift für Otto Brunner*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963: 60-87.

46. Deploige, Jeroen. "Meurtre politique, guerre civile et catharsis littéraire au XIIe siècle. Les émotions dans l'œuvre de Guibert de Nogent et de Galbert de Bruges", *Politiques des émotions au Moyen Age*, Damien Boquet, Piroska Nagy, eds. Florence: Florence University Press, 2010: 245.

47. Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologica* (*Die deutsche Thomas-Ausgabe*). Salzburg: Pustet, 1953: I, 108, 2.

48. Gilles Le Muisit. *Chronique et annales de Gilles le Muisit, abbé de Saint-Martin de Tournai (1272-1352)*, ed. Henri Lemaître. Paris: Renouard, 1906: 43.

49. Jacobi Muevin. *Chronicon Jacobi Muevin*, ed. Jean-Jacques de Smet. *Corpus chronicorum Flandriae*. Brussels: Hayez, 1841: II, 457-458. About the use of these terms, see also: Constable, Giles. "Was there a medieval middle class? 'Mediocres (mediani, medii)' in the middle Ages", *Portraits of medieval and renaissance living. Essays in honor of David Herlihy*, Samuel Cohn, Stephen Epstein, eds. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996: 301-323.



in other regions in Europe as well.⁵⁰ One vernacular source also gives a telling example of the widespread use of this 'tripartite description' of social distinction in town. In a 1296 investigation of the causes of the social turmoil in the 1280s, the Ghent patrician Willem Utenhove divided the urban population into three parts. As a city official, he said that he had acted for the *plus grant pourfit* of everyone, namely the *marcans, bourgeois et au commun de le vile de Gand*.⁵¹ The groups he named were, respectively, the hereditary families who had governed the city in previous year, the burghers who had citizenship rights, and the *povres gens*. Though Utenhove regretted that some citizens had been impoverished in the previous decade by factional divides between governing families of the city, he nonetheless tried to convince his readers to ignore the demands of the common people to abolish the political power of these families.

The 13th century royal officer Philippe de Beaumanoir, who mentioned the rise of the Flemish commoners in his *Coutumes de Beauvaisis*, was more understanding towards their political demands. Although Beaumanoir condemned the disturbance of social order—he remained a royal officer—he did not minimize the political desires of the citizens as much as his predecessors had. In his collection of customs Beaumanoir viewed the mobilisation of the poor and the 'middle' of the town (*li povres* and *li moiens*) as a rupture of public peace which had to be adequately punished.⁵² However, he considered their fiscal and political demands rightful, because the rich and the poor both should be taxed according to their estate.⁵³ A similar view can be found in a contemporary chronicler who wrote in the vernacular language, Dutch, the everyday language of Flemish commoners. The cleric Jacob van Maerlant, who lived in Damme at the end of the 13th century and thus witnessed the protest under study, sympathized with the moral and political criticisms expressed by social protesters to urban rulers and the clerical elite. In addition, Maerlant used the terms *meentucht van der stede* or *mentucht van der pord* to

50. See for instance the terminology that was used to describe social layers in Sicilian and Catalan towns: Titone, Fabrizio. *Governments of the Universities. Urban communities of Sicily in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009: 182-183; Sabaté, Flocel. "Oligarchies and social fractures in the cities of late medieval Catalonia", *Oligarchy and patronage. Late medieval Spanish urban society*, Maria Asenjo-Gonzalez, ed. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009: 1.

51. Warnkönig, Leopold. "Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire des trente-neuf de Gand". *Messenger des Sciences Historiques*, 1 (1833): 113.

52. *Et entre les autres mesfès dont nous avons parlé ci-dessus, l'uns des plus grans et dont li seigneur se doivent prendre plus pres de prendre vengeance, si est des aliances fetes contre seigneur ou contre le commun pourfit*. Beaumanoir, Philippe de. *Coutumes de Beauvaisis*, ed. Amédée Salmon. Paris: Picard, 1899: I, 446. The fragment is put into context by: Bourin, Monique. "Les révoltes dans la France du XIV^e siècle: traditions historiographiques et nouvelles recherches", *Rivolte urbane e rivolta contadina nell'Europa del Trecento: un confronto*, Monique Bourin, Giovanni Cherubini, Giuliano Pinto, eds. Florence: Firenze University Press, 2008: 57-58.

53. *Et adont il doit asseoir la taille en sa vile par loial enqueste, aussi les riches comme les povres, chascun selonc son estat et selonc ce qu'il est mestiers a la vile, que la taille soit grans ou petite*. Beaumanoir, Philippe de. *Coutumes de Beauvaisis*.... II, 271.



describe protesting crowds in his translation of the Bible in 1271.⁵⁴ In other writings, he denounced clerics and officials who abused their power. So it is possible that Jacob van Maerlant was actively involved in the political turbulence of his time.⁵⁵

As in late medieval England, in Flanders rebels received assistance from lawyers, jurists and clerks who composed the rebels' texts.⁵⁶ The 1275 Ghent document quoted above, for example, was written by an anonymous *procureur dou commun*.⁵⁷ Moreover, petitions generally used legal language because a text written in this language was more likely to be adopted in its entirety and promulgated as urban law by the government.⁵⁸ The intertextuality of petitions, legislative documents, and chronicles which were written by (even clerical) clerks is not surprising. A pessimistic view would hold that protesters' words were 'filtered' by clerks who autonomously decided which ideas should be recorded and sent to the urban rulers. However, such a view denies the agency of protesting groups. The fact that the clerks in question did determine the choice of words in these documents does not mean that the 'commoners' did not understand the ideas that were expressed, or that they did not grasp the political connotations and the historical background of the terminology which they continually heard and employed. These people likely identified with these terms and their meanings. Reifying a dichotomy between rebels' writing and elitist texts oversimplifies historical reality. There was rather a permanent dialogue between rulers and ruled, and dialectical use of terms and ideas which were interpreted differently by opposing groups. The following section shows that we can understand the identity of social protestors only within this dialectical framework of interchangeable and malleable political ideas which could take on multiple interpretations.

4. The self-representation of the *meentucht* in the 1280s

As Gudrun Gleba noticed for late medieval Germany, the creation of the collectivity which called itself the *Gemeinde* at the end of the 13th century did not originate from a theoretical model based on prior assumptions, but from concrete pre-existing local structures which were already in place before the appearance of

54. Jacob van Maerlant. *Rymbybel*, ed. Jan Baptist David. Brussels: Hayez, 1858: II, 523, 526. About Maerlant's life and work: Oostrom, Frits van. *Stemmen op schrift...*: 512-516.

55. Dumolyn, Jan; Haemers, Jelle. "'Let each man do his trade and remain silent'. Middle class ideology in the urban literature of the late medieval Low Countries". *Cultural and Social History*, 10 (2013): 177-178.

56. Scase, Wendy. *Literature and complaint in England, 1272-1553*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007: 115.

57. Vuylsteke, Julius. *Uitleggingen tot de Gentsche...*: 78.

58. See the remarks of: Nierop, Henk van. "Popular participation in politics in the Dutch Republic", *Resistance, representation and community*, Peter Blickle, ed. New York: Clarendon Press, 1997: 280-290; Fuhrmann, Rosi. Kumin, Beat; Würgler, Andreas. "Supplizierende Gemeinden. Aspekte einer vergleichenden Quellenbetrachtung", *Gemeinde und Staat im Alten Europa*, Peter Blickle, ed. Munich: Oldenbourg, 1998: 267-269.



the *Gemeinde* in the sources.⁵⁹ This means that each of these collectivities was shaped by the social conditions in which it arose, and that the *ghemeente* in a particular city of Flanders differed from the *ghemeente* in another city and another region. A historian must therefore take into account the local specific conditions surrounding the 'commoners' in order to clarify the particularities of their 'self-understanding'. A close reading of the commoners' petitions should allow us to determine how the Flemish *ghemeente* differed from those in German, French, Italian, or English towns. Although more research is needed on the precise social background of the people in question in order to understand the concrete meaning of many of their assumptions fully, it is possible to identify certain local characteristics of Flemish commoners. In particular, we can derive some economic, fiscal, political, judicial and territorial aspects of their self-image from the sources. Some of these aspects compare closely with those of other regions in Europe; others are less common.

To begin a reconstruction of the economic self-portrait drawn by the Flemish *meentuch*, the petitions particularly stress the affiliation of the *meentucht* with the embryonic craft guilds. In some cities, craftsmen had already formed *ghilden* (guilds), though most of them were still governed by members of powerful families.⁶⁰ Since the petitioners charged that trade was controlled by the (alleged) arbitrary actions of these powerful clans, it is not surprising that the emancipation of craftsmen and the fair regulation of trade were two of their main requests. In Ghent, a main industrial cloth centre, the commoners logically asked for better regulation of the wool trade, *que ce seroit pourfis au coumun*.⁶¹ In the Ypres petition of 1280, the drapers asked for *boines coutumes et boine lois* ("good customs and good laws") for the wool trade and drapery production, desiring non-discriminatory rules that would insure the *commun pourfit* of every townsmen.⁶² In 1280, they received this right and the city government's order that drapers no longer could meddle in the affairs of other craftsmen.⁶³ In the end, these demands led to the award of corporate privileges to the craft guilds in Ypres, just as craftsmen in other towns obtained the rights of economic self-regulation and political autonomy over the late 13th and the early

59. Gleba, Gudrun. *Die Gemeinde...*: 251.

60. The primary reference remains. See: Wyffels, Carlos. *De oorspong der ambachten in Vlaanderen en Brabant*. Brussels: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten, 1951. A more recent survey in: Stabel, Peter. "Guilds in late medieval Flanders: myths and realities of guild life in an export-oriented environment". *Journal of Medieval History*, 30 (2004): 187-212; Prak, Maarten. "Corporate politics in the Low Countries: guilds as institutions, 14th to 18th centuries", *Craft Guilds in the Early Modern Low Countries. Work, power and representation*, Maarten Prak, Catharina Lis, Jan Lucassen, Hugo Soly, eds. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006: 74-106.

61. Espinas, George; Pirenne, Henri. *Recueil de documents...*: 383. This demand would finally lead to the promulgation of a new privilege for the town from Count Guy de Dampierre in 1297. Gheldolf, Albert. *Coutume de la ville de Gand*. Brussels: Gobbaerts, 1868: 500.

62. Doudelez, Gustave. "La révolution communale de 1280 à Ypres". *Revue des Questions Historiques*, 133 (1939): 69.

63. Doudelez, Gustave. "La révolution communale...": 19-20.



14th centuries. These economic rights and the prosperity resulting from the new regulations would be at the core of their corporate identity in the late Middle Ages.⁶⁴

In the 1280s, however, the craftsmen still had a long way to go. In both Bruges and Damme in 1280, the *meente* demanded that craftsmen be governed by a proper administration, led by *deken ende vinders*, as the commoners of Damme demanded, elected by *wie, ambochtslieden* ("we, the craftsmen").⁶⁵ In these documents, the main characteristic the commoners seemed to identify themselves with was manual labour. The Damme petition invokes *arme lieden diet winnen met haren leden* ("poor people who make money with their limbs") who pay more taxes than the rich (*die rike*).⁶⁶ While combining 'the rich and the poor' was often a figure of speech used to indicate the total urban population (the Ypres document of 1280 referred to *Toutes gens, petit et grant* to indicate that all townsmen should obey the urban customs),⁶⁷ the Damme petition seems to make the division between the rich and poor a reason for its demands, in same manner seen in several 13th century German sources which explicitly named manual laborers.⁶⁸ Because the 'poor and the commonality' (*die arme ente ghemente*) were severely hurt by heavy taxes, it stated, the *meente* demanded reduction of the consumer tax on beer.⁶⁹ The economic situation faced by commoners and identification with trade and industrial activities seem to have been important aspects of their identity. Research into 15th century petitions from the Flemish craft guilds has shown that economic justice would remain a significant element in the discourse of craftsmen in the following centuries.⁷⁰

The stress which the petition of the *ghemeente* of Damme put on fiscal conditions shows that the petitioners were well aware how financially important they were to the city government. 'Fiscal self-consciousness' evoked demands to produce the public accounts of the city administration and to prohibit urban rulers from granting gifts without the consent of the "commonality which pays for it", as the Bruges petition of 1280 phrased it.⁷¹ This particular demand was the initial reaction to a city ordinance promulgated by the Bruges authorities a few days before the redaction of the petition. On 28 September, the aldermen had ordered all *lieden die ghelt ghegadert hebben in meentuchten* ("citizens who had collected money in commonality") to hand

64. Wyffels, Carlos. *De oorsprong der ambachten...*: 85-89; Boone, Marc. *A la recherche d'une modernité civique. La société urbaine des anciens Pays-Bas au bas Moyen Age*. Brussels: Presses Universitaires de Bruxelles, 2010: 38-40.

65. Smet, Antoine de. "De klacht...": 12.

66. Smet, Antoine de. "De klacht...": 129.

67. "All people, small and big". Doudelez, Gustave. "La révolution communale...": 70.

68. Monnet, Pierre. "Les révoltes urbaines en Allemagne aux XIV^e siècle: un état de la question", *Rivolte urbane e rivolte contadine nell'Europa del Trecento: un confronto*, Monique Bourin, Giovanni Cherubini, Giuliano Pinto, eds. Florence: Firenze University Press, 2008: 142-143; Maschke, Erich. *Städte und Menschen. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stadt, der Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*. Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1980: 159-165.

69. Smet, Antoine de. "De klacht...": 9.

70. Dumolyn, Jan. "'Our land is only founded on trade and industry'. Economic discourses in fifteenth-century Bruges". *Journal of Medieval History*, 36 (2010): 374-389.

71. *Dat men negheen ghifte mochte gheven sonder die meintucht, omdat siet selve ghelden*. Wyffels, Carlos. "Nieuwe gevegens...": 105.



these sums over to the authorities.⁷² The ordinance referred to a common practice in Bruges (and in other Flemish cities as well), of maintaining a *bus*, or 'solidarity box', in which craftsmen could choose (or, in some cases, were obligated) to deposit money to assist other members in times of need.⁷³ The ordinance demonstrates that urban rulers feared the financial power of the craftsmen, who would, in fact, use the money to buy weapons in future years. More importantly, the statement reveals that the collective group had a specific political purpose for amassing the money because they collected it 'in commonality'. The same ordinance ordered people not to *meentucht van ghilde te makene* ("make the commonality of a guild"), an indication that the urban rulers feared craftsmen's political actions.⁷⁴ In sentences such as the rebel's demand to get what they had paid for, one can see the famous adage, 'no taxation without representation', or rather, 'no citizenship without political participation'. For the protesters, their fiscal contributions to the city had to be spent on the common interests of every townsman. Their 'fiscal identity' had a political edge, which could not be ignored by urban rulers.

In a more radical expression from 1295, the *li boene gent communaument de Nuefport* ("good guys, together in commonality" of Nieuwpoort), a small port-town on the Flemish coast, pushed these political ideas further.⁷⁵ In the citizens' view, the count was supposed to maintain *le commun pourfit de le ville*, because *comme il leur samble, uns communs pourfis doet alier et miex valouer de une singuliere personne*.⁷⁶ In his detailed study of the Nieuwpoort petition, Walter Prevenier connected these claims to widespread ideas of political equality, expressed by Thomas Aquinas, mendicant friars and other dissident writers, such as the English peasants who shouted in 1381: "When Adam delved and Eve span, who then was a gentleman?"⁷⁷ Similar thoughts can be found in one of Jacob van Maerlant's poems which was written during the turbulent decades at the end of the 13th century. He posed the central question in this type of moralist social criticism: why were there nobles, freemen and serfs, if all men descended from Adam? Maerlant wrote that *twee woorde in die werelt*

72. Wyffels, Carlos. "Nieuwe gegevens...": 103. See also: Dumolyn, Jan; Haemers, Jelle. "Reclaiming the common sphere...": 177-178.

73. Wyffels, Carlos. *De oorsprong der ambachten...*: 97-99. See also: Bos, Sandra. "A tradition of giving and receiving: mutual aid within the guild system", *Craft Guilds in the Early Modern Low Countries. Work, power and representation*, Maarten Prak, Catharina Lis, Jan Lucassen, Hugo Soly, eds. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006: 174-193; Haemers, Jelle; Ryckbosch, Wouter. "A targeted public. Public services in fifteenth-century Ghent and Bruges". *Urban History*, 37 (2010): 220-221.

74. Wyffels, Carlos. "Nieuwe gegevens...": 104.

75. *Li boene gent* normally refers to the better-off burghers of town, but the demands of the 'good guys' (such as fiscal equality) indicate that their social background probably resembled that of the urban protesters in other Flemish towns. Degryse, Roger. "'s Graven domein te Nieuwpoort". *Annales de la Société d'Emulation de Bruges*, 85 (1948): 110.

76. "as it seems to them, the common profit is worth more than the profit of a single person". Degryse, Roger. "'s Graven domein te Nieuwpoort...": 111.

77. Prevenier, Walter. "Conscience et perception...": 187; Hilton, Rodney, *Bond men made free: medieval peasant movements and the English rising of 1381*. London: Routledge, 1973: 210-213. See also: Frenz, Barbara. *Gleichheitsdenken in deutschen Städten des 12. bis 15. Jahrhunderts. Geistesgeschichte, Quellensprache, Gesellschaftsfunktion*. Cologne: Böhlau, 2000.



*sijn, dats allene 'mijn' ende 'dijn'. Mocht men die verdriven, pais ende vrede bleve fijn; het ware al vri, niemen eighijn. Manne metten wiven. Het ware ghemene tarwe ende wijn.*⁷⁸ Of course, these egalitarian statements were not 'communist' views from people who questioned property rights. After all, some of the 1280s protesters were tradesmen and middle-class craftsmen who had a relatively wealthy social position which they wanted to maintain. They questioned the political authority and even the wealth of their rulers because their rulers had not taken the interests of tax-paying fellow-citizens into account. As in similar conflicts all over Europe, the demand of equality in this context meant a desire for fiscal fairness, open access to the law courts for all burghers, and eligibility of all full citizens for political office.⁷⁹

Demands for fiscal equality and a kind of political equality did not mean, in the protesters' view, that all inhabitants of the county should be equally treated by the count, for the protestors basically wanted to maintain their urban privileges. In the Bruges petitions, the demonstrators called themselves *dien van der poert* ("those of the city").⁸⁰ The Damme petition insisted that the *die vrihede van der port* ("freedoms of the city") be maintained.⁸¹ In the first place, these demands sought to justify the social protest, since they were addressed to those who did not really care about local customs anymore (if we follow the protesters' logic). But in the second place, these demands were intended to maintain the fundamental legal inequality of medieval society. In the complaints of the Damme *mentucht* in 1299, addressed to the local bailiff, who had arrested citizens 'outside the city gate without process', we can read a righteous charge against arbitrary justice, but also a claim for privileged judgment on the basis of advantageous freedoms (which people in the countryside did not enjoy).⁸² As medievalists know, 'collective selfishness' about personal freedoms and legal self-determination among commoners was a characteristic of every city in medieval Europe and a central feature of the political and judicial identity of townsmen.⁸³ The 12th-century 'commune' as the ideal against its antipode, feudal society with its alleged arbitrariness, remained a classic rallying point for ages to come.⁸⁴ Urban

78. "there are two words in the world, only 'mine' and 'thine'. If one could banish those words, there would be peace, all would be free and no one a serf, men or women, and the wheat and wine would all be in common". *Jacob van Maerlant's strophische gedichten*, ed. Eelco Verwijs. Groningen: Wolters, 1879: 26.

79. Black, Antony. *Guilds and civil society*...: 74.

80. Wyffels, Carlos. "Nieuwe gegevens...": 106. *Poert* was the common description of city in 13th Flanders. Van Uytven, Raymond. "'Poort': une contribution à la lexicographie urbaine", *Villes et campagnes au Moyen Age. Mélanges Georges Despy*. Liège: Perron, 1991: 747-762.

81. Smet, Antoine de. "De klacht...": 10.

82. *Als dat hi onse porters hevet ghehouden buter port, sonder wet ende vonnesse*. Nowé, Henri. *Les baillis comtaux*...: 436.

83. Attreed, Lorraine. "Urban identity in medieval English towns". *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 32 (2002): 571-572; Diestelkamp, Bernhard. "Freiheit der Bürger – Freiheit der Stadt", *Die abendländische Freiheit vom 10. zum 14. Jahrhundert. Der Wirkungszusammenhang von Idee und Wirklichkeit im europäischen Vergleich*, Fried Johannes, ed. Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1991: 485-510; Black, Antony. *Political thought in Europe, 1250-1450*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1992: 28-31.

84. Compare with: Lutz, Robert. "Wer war der gemeine Mann?", *Der Deutsche Bauernkrieg von 1525*, Peter Blickle, ed. Darmstadt: Hermann, 1985: 452-467.



liberties constituted the core of the local identity of many late medieval European citizens, who collectively defended their values and rights of self-determination when these were undermined by princes or intra-urban rivals.⁸⁵ Some scholars compare this devotion to local customs and liberties to modern nationalism, as both belief systems stress the concept of an objective reality of nations or peoples as communities with collective political rights as well as shared histories and cultures.⁸⁶

Some scholars note that such 'nationalist' political communities identified principally with the physical space in which their privileges applied.⁸⁷ This holds true for Flemish cities, where commoners increasingly associated themselves with the physical territory in which they lived. As Martha Howell has written, the history of urban identities is not only a history of ideas and conceptualizations, but also a material history, a history of how physical spaces gave meaning to the concept of an urban whole, how these spaces defined and legitimised the political acts and other activities that defined the citizen, and how the concept of the urban 'common good' was realized.⁸⁸ The citizens of Bruges called themselves 'those of the city' in the 1280 petition, a concrete expression of the equation of citizens with 'their' physical space during this period. Portions of the Damme petition of the same year show that the 13th century *meente* not only claimed public space in the literal sense, but that the commoners were also struggling to govern that space. In the text, the commoners charged the aldermen with corruption because they had not paved the streets, even though they had increased taxes for that purpose. The commoners also complained that the former mayor had demolished a reinforcement of the shores of the port's main canal 'that belonged to the commonality'.⁸⁹ According to the petition he had allowed to build houses on this place. These complaints show that the commoners were concerned with the management of urban space and the concrete physical locations where they gathered and traded. The commoners, especially tradesmen and craftsmen, wanted a say in the construction of public buildings and the supervision of public space, because they contributed fiscally to the organization of that space.

85. Coleman, Janet. "Structural realities of power. The theory and practice of monarchies and republics in relation to personal and collective liberty", *The propagation of power in the medieval west*, Martin Gosman, Arjo Vanderjagt, Jan Veenstra, eds. Groningen: Forsten, 1997: 207-230; Kaufhold, Martin. *Die Rhythmen politischer Reform im späten Mittelalter. Institutioneller Wandel in Deutschland, England und an der Kurie 1198-1400 im Vergleich*. Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2008: 313-327.

86. Reynolds, Susan. "The idea of the nation as a political community", *Power and the nation in European history*, Lean Scales, Oliver Zimmer, eds. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2005: 54. See also: Davies, Rees. "Nations and national identities in the medieval world. An apologia". *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, 34 (2004): 567-567; Stein, Robert. "Introduction", *Networks, regions and nation. Shaping identities in the Low Countries, 1300-1650*, Robert Stein, Judith Pollmann, eds. Leiden: Brill, 2010: 14-15.

87. Reynolds, Susan. "The idea of the nation...": 58.

88. Howell, Martha. "The spaces of late medieval urbanity", *Shaping urban identity in late medieval Europe*, Marc Boone, Peter Stabel, eds. Leuven: Garant, 2000: 19. See also: Boone, Marc; Howell, Martha, eds. *The Power of Space in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe. The Cities of Italy, Northern France and the Low Countries*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2013.

89. *Ene plate ... die der meente toebehorde*. Smet, Antoine de. "De klacht...": 12.



Commoners voiced similar concerns in other cities. In the initial years after the craft guilds took over urban governments in the Flemish cities in the 1300s, Ghent, Ypres and Bruges carried out ambitious building programs in the contemporary, elaborate and self-assured Gothic style of architecture. As in other cities which had obtained rights of self-government in the past centuries, also in Flanders public buildings, such as a cloth hall, meat hall and, last but not least, a pompous city hall were built. These structures symbolized the economic wealth and the political autonomy of the citizens, who regarded the prestigious monuments as markers of their identity.⁹⁰ In the same time period, they also created useful open space for gathering the craft guilds and selling merchandise, such as the 'Great Market' squares in Bruges and Ypres, and the *Plaetse* in front of the city hall in Ghent.⁹¹ Last but not least, they constructed new city walls or ramparts, which had a specific socio-political and legal use in addition to their military function. These cities already had walls raised during their struggle with the count to obtain the 1120s communal privileges, and immediately afterwards. Raising the walls was a symbolical act which distinguished the urban space from the less-privileged surrounding countryside for eternity. Building a second set of moats and ramparts around the city at the beginning of the 14th century was just as emblematic.⁹² With their wider diameter, the new fortifications incorporated the citizens of the former suburbs (where most of the craftsmen lived). The ambitious building campaign was the final act in the social emancipation of the commoners and their inclusion in the city's political space. It was the materialisation of their communal identity.

5. Conclusion: a 'communal identity'

In the last quarter of the 13th century, the Flemish city was in transition. Social groups which had been excluded from power struggled for social and political

90. Van Uytven, Raymond. "Flämische Belfriede und südniederländische städtische Bauwerke im Mittelalter: Symbol und Mythos", *Information, Kommunikation und Selbstdarstellung in mittelalterlichen Gemeinden*, Alfred Haverkamp, ed. Munich: Oldenbourg, 1998: 125-159; Coomans, Thomas. "Belfries, cloth halls, hospitals and mendicant churches: a new urban architecture in the Low Countries around 1300", *The year 1300 and the creation of a new European architecture*, Alexandra Gajewski, Zoë Opacic, eds. Turnhout: Brepols, 2007: 185-202. One can compare with other cities which had a strong communal tradition, such as Saint-Quentin and Geneva: Hamel, Sébastien. *La justice dans une ville du Nord du royaume de France au Moyen Age. Etude sur la pratique judiciaire à Saint-Quentin (fin XIe-début XVe siècle)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011: 35; Caesar, Mathieu. *Le pouvoir en ville. Gestion urbaine et pratiques politiques à Genève (fin XIIIe-début XVIe siècles)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011: 20.

91. Ryckaert, Marc. *Brugge. Historische stedenatlas van België*. Brussels: Gemeentekrediet, 1991: 91-93; Mus, Octaaf. *De geschiedenis van de middeleeuwse grootstad Ieper. Van Karolingische villa tot de destructie in 1914*. Ypres: Stad Ieper, 2010: 44-45; Laleman, Marie-Christine; Vermeiren, Geert. "Ruimte en bebouwing in het centrum van het middeleeuwse Gent". *Handelingen der Maatschappij voor Geschiedenis en Oudheidkunde te Gent*, 64 (2010): 36-39.

92. Dumolyn, Jan. "Economic development, social space, and political power in Bruges, c.1127–c.1302", *Contact and exchange in medieval Europe. Essays in honour of Malcolm Vale*, Hannah Skoda, Patrick Lantschner, eds. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2012: 33-58.



recognition. The protest did not aim at overthrowing the social order, because it only questioned the authority and legitimacy of the ruling families. In this type of crisis two forms of legitimacy clashed. The legitimacy of groups who fought for political dialogue and participation ‘from below’ collided with the more static legitimacy of established power which was used to governing autocratically. Such a conflict should not be interpreted as the source of the great evils of its time, but rather as a manifestation of the vitality of medieval political society.⁹³ In the same way, we should view the medieval protest of the 1280s as a vital struggle of newly emerging groups within the town. Their struggle was not a conservative effort to maintain privileges, as many have characterised medieval popular protest.⁹⁴ The urban ‘commoners’, as they called themselves, fought for new privileges which would give them corporate autonomy and rights of political participation. They also forced the ruling oligarchy to be accountable for the management of urban space and the city treasury. While the protesters did not see their wishes fulfilled immediately, the principles of accountability, political participation and representation they demanded became the building blocks of medieval politics in the next few centuries, and of many later constitutions.⁹⁵

The social protest of the 1280s was very heterogeneous, because wealthy tradesmen, poorer craftsmen and middle class artisans united forces to fight their common enemy. The protesters had a shared, distinct and insistent identity. They presented themselves as the *meentucht*, a vernacular translation (or better: a contemporary interpretation) of the Latin *communitas*. As they held only their purpose in common (namely, gaining political power), and not their social background, it is not surprising that the protesters chose a general term to identify themselves. Every protester could identify with its meaning, which cleverly referred to a well-known discursive register of political thought. The point of reference of the terms like *ghemeente* and *meente* was the 12th-century ‘commune’, the sworn association which had the power to regulate and govern its own affairs. The 13th century commoners cleverly used the sophisticated discourse about these communes to define its self-understanding. I would not define *meentucht* as an ‘oppositional principle’, as Gudrun Gleba did, though she is right when she claims that terms such as *Gemeinde*

93. Genet, Jean-Philippe. “Le coup d’Etat, ou les légitimités contrariées”, *Coups d’Etats à la fin du Moyen Age? Aux fondements du pouvoir politique en Europe occidentale*, François Foronda, Jean-Philippe Genet, José Manuel Nieto, eds. Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2005: 14.

94. See, for instance: Mullet, Michael. *Popular culture and popular protest in late medieval and early modern Europe*. London: Routledge, 1987: 1. Sam Cohn rightly reevaluates this view in: Cohn, Sam. “The modernity of medieval popular revolt”. *History Compass*, 10 (2012): 731-741. Useful new insights are also offered by the case studies in: Oliva, Hipólito Rafael; Challet, Vincent; Dumolyn, Jan; Carmona, María Antonia, eds. *La comunidad medieval como esfera pública*. Seville: Editorial Universidad de Sevilla, 2014; Solórzano, Jesús; Bolumburu, Beatriz; Haemers, Jelle, eds. *Los grupos populares en la ciudad medieval Europea*. Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2014.

95. This is the main argument of Christian Liddy and Jelle Haemers: Liddy, Christian; Haemers, Jelle. “Popular politics in the late medieval town: York and Bruges”. *English Historical Review*, 128 (2013): 771-805.



were used to undermine the authority of political opponents of the 'commoners'.⁹⁶ *Communitas* was an authoritative principle that inspired the political acts of rulers and their subordinate citizens. Both parties saw it as an urban community, albeit perhaps idealized, in which rulers acted for the common interest of every citizen, although there was vehement discussion over whose particular interests were truly 'common'.

96. Sie erweist sich als ein oppositionelles Prinzip, in dem das bisher im Stadtre Regiment vorherrschende hierarchische, von oben nach unten ausgerichtete Herrschaftskonzept wesentliche Umformungen erfährt. Gleba, Gudrun. *Die Gemeinde...*: 252.



THE *PETIT THALAMUS* OF MONTPELLIER. MOVING MIRROR OF AN URBAN POLITICAL IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

The *Petit Thalamus* of Montpellier contains the oldest urban chronicle ever written in a vernacular language in Western Europe and this chronicle, whose oldest versions are dating from the beginning of the 13th century, is the conscious work of a consulate that accomplishes a flashback on its origins. Then, it does not simply record the history of Montpellier: by forging a common memory, it creates the town as a *universitas* and plays a decisive role in the emergence of an urban consciousness. In addition to the common walls, which realised the physical unity of Montpellier, the *Petit Thalamus*, by contributing to the mental unity of the citizens, has been one of the most important pieces in the creation of the town, whose importance is equal to the great seal of the consulate. Thus, it is a keystone in the construction of this fragile balance that represents a medieval town.¹

KEYWORDS

Montpellier, Middle Ages, Urban chronicle, Consulate, Memory.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Montispessulanum, Medium Aevum, Chronica urbis, Consulatus, Memoria.

1. Introduction

*L'an MLXXXVII los crestians prezeron Barsalona.*² It is by these words that the notary of Montpellier's consulate opens his list of 'antiquities and events' located just before the annals of the town, formally beginning only in 1204. Even if the date is incorrect, it keeps the memory of the capture and the sack of Barcelona by the Muslim leader Al-Mansûr in 985. This event is the oldest one contained in such a list and, therefore, the oldest traumatic event inscribed in the memory of Montpellier, which is an evident witness of the long lasting relations established between the town and the dynasty of the counts of Barcelona who later became kings of Aragon and, finally, by the wedding of Pierre of Aragon with Marie de Montpellier, heir of the Guilhem's dynasty, in 1204, lords of Montpellier.³ Surprisingly, nobody had ever noticed that the real—not the incorrect one that figures in the *Petit Thalamus*—date of the sack of Barcelona, 985, is exactly the moment when Montpellier first appears in an historical charter: indeed, on the 25th of November 985, Bernard, count of Melgueil, gives to somebody called Guilhem a land which is located in *terminium villa Montepestelario*.⁴ This cannot really be a simple coincidence. Thus, the date of 985 is linked both to the birth of the town and to the beginning of its history, even if, in the last case, the real date is a hidden one because it only appears under the year of 1088: at Montpellier, as elsewhere, history emerges at the same time than the town itself. But it works as if the consulate deliberately chose to conceal the first appearance's date of its own town by masking it under a wrong date for the taking of Barcelona in a sort of a conscious shadow game which uses the mask of Barcelona to hide the foundation of the town and the key role played by the Guilhem's dynasty in its growth. Of course, such a complicated game could only

1. This article has its origins into the scientific project *Thalamus* (2010-JCJC 2003 01), coordinated by Vincent Challet and funded by the National Research Agency of the Government of France (about this project, see: Challet, Vincent. "Le Petit Thalamus: un monument-document de l'histoire montpelliéraine". *Bulletin Historique de la Ville de Montpellier*, 34 (2009): 24-37). It takes place in the project *¿El poder de la comunidad?: Lengua y practicas politicas populares a fines de la Edad Media* (HAR 2011-30035), funded by Ministry of Science and Innovation of the Government of Spain. The text is based on a paper presented at the congress entitled *En formato de identidad. Identidades Políticas Urbanas en la Edad Media* held in Madrid on the 27th-28th of September, 2012. I would like to thank Professor Yolanda Guerrero Navarrete for her kind invitation to attend this conference and Julie for having been on my side on this occasion. Used abbreviations: AMM, Archives Municipales de Montpellier; ANF, Archives Nationales de France; BIUM, Bibliothèque interuniversitaire de Montpellier; BMN, Bibliothèque Municipale de Nîmes; BNF, Bibliothèque Nationale de France; BRB, Bibliothèque Royale de Bruxelles.

2. "In the year 1087 the Christians took Barcelona". AMM. AA 9, f. 70v. A new complete electronic edition and presentation of the *Thalamus de Montpellier* is now available on: Le Projet Thalamus. "Édition critique numérique du manuscrit AA 9 des Archives municipales de Montpellier dit Le Petit Thalamus". *Le Petit Thalamus de Montpellier*. 18 August 2015, Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3. 18 August 2015 <<http://thalamus.huma-num.fr>>.

3. Vidal, Henri. "L'Aragon et la révolution montpelliéraine de 1204", *Montpellier, la Couronne d'Aragon et les pays de Langue d'Oc (1204-1349). Actes du 12^e Congrès d'histoire de la Couronne d'Aragon (Montpellier, 26-29 septembre 1985)*. Montpellier: Société Archéologique de Montpellier, 1987: 43-60.

4. Vidal, Henri. "Aux origines de Montpellier : la donation de 985". *Bulletin Historique de la Ville de Montpellier*, 5 (1985): 11-37.



be understood by a few readers and supposes that the initial charter's memory was well kept. Indeed, if the original document of 985 is lost, a copy of this act was inscribed at the beginning of the 13th century in the *Liber Instrumentorum Memorialis*, a manuscript which is also known under the name of the *Cartulaire des Guilhem* as it mainly contains copies of acts concerning the lordship of the Guilhem's family.⁵ Then, this allusion to Barcelona's capture must be seen as one of these 'phantoms of remembrance' analyzed by Patrick Geary.⁶

2. The making of urban memory: the *Petit Thalamus* as a keystone of civic identity

From many points of view, the AA 9 manuscript, known under the name of the *Petit Thalamus* is an invaluable source for the story of Montpellier and, at the same time, a masterpiece of the huge enterprise of memorial rebuilding realized under the control of the consuls from the years 1240-1260. It belongs to this type of manuscripts that Jacques Le Goff described as a 'monument-document', meaning by this expression a real value as a source of knowledge, both for medieval people and for nowadays historians, and a memorial dimension always present in the mind of urban magistrates concerned about the fact of putting in written words the main events of their town. The *Petit Thalamus* is a quite composite manuscript as it contains the most fundamental juridical texts of the town—including the customs of 1204,⁷ the oaths of the main officers and the urban laws—in the Italian tradition of the *Libri iurium*⁸ but also, from 1204 and for each year, the list of the consuls and the main officers (*bayles* and judges) which developed itself firstly into annals and then into a real urban chronicle. But this chronicle has itself a double origin which has been revealed by the study of the AA 9 manuscript written from 1334 onwards and which is, in fact, the most recent one of all the copies of the *Petit Thalamus*: in the oldest ones, the list of 'antiquities and events' is written separately from the list of the consuls which is presented year by year; on the contrary, in the AA 9 manuscript, these events—not all of them, but only a selection—are reported

5. It has been published by Alexandre Germain and Camille Chabaneau: *Liber Instrumentorum Memorialium, cartulaire des Guilhems de Montpellier*, ed. Alexandre Germain, Camille Chabaneau. Montpellier: J. Martel Ainé, 1884-1886: 284-285. On this document, see also: Chastang, Pierre. "La préface du 'Liber instrumentorum memorialis' des Guilhem de Montpellier ou les enjeux de la rédaction d'un cartulaire laïque méridional", *Les cartulaires méridionaux*, Daniel Le Blévec, dir. Paris: École des Chartes, 2006: 91-123. Pierre Chastang dates the first phase of the compilation from 1202.

6. Geary, Patrick. *Phantoms of Remembrance. Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millenium*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

7. Gouron, André. "'Libertas Hominum Montispessulani'. Rédaction et diffusion des coutumes de Montpellier". *Annales du Midi*, 90 (1978): 289-318.

8. For a general presentation, see: Rovere, Antonella. "Tipologia documentale nei 'Libri iurium' dell'Italia comunale", *La diplomatie urbaine en Europe au Moyen Âge*, Walter Prevenier, Thérèse de Hemptine eds. Leuven: Garain, 2000: 417-436.



in the margins of the main text. Nevertheless, some historical contents began to appear following directly the names of the twelve consuls of Montpellier: the first one took place in 1218 and is the taking of the castle of Madières. The sentence contained in the AA 9 manuscript is very laconic and does not really reveal the role played by Montpellier in this capture as it only says: *E fon pres adoncs lo castel de Madieryras*.⁹ Thus, to fully understand why it has to be kept in the urban memory, we must look to an older version probably composed between 1270 and 1280: *Et en aquel an, prezeron li homes de Montpellier Madieryras que son en Larzac, e deroqueron lo castel, e cremeron los vals, car lo senhor del castel raubava los camins*.¹⁰ This more complete relation of the events allows us to realise that such an expedition was taken in charge by the militias of Montpellier under the consulate's leadership itself in order to guarantee freedom of trade and of movement in the hinterland, first step to establish a 'contado'. It is then not surprising that this decision, symptomatic of the new power of the consulate twelve years only after having been officially recognized by the king of Aragon, Pierre II, broke up the general outline to slot into the lists of consuls at the beginning of the 13th century. In a slightly different way, the oldest thing recalled in the 'antiquities and events' about the town itself is connected with the Guilhems' lordship but in a very allusive way: it only says that, in 1141, *valian en Montpellier X favas I denier*.¹¹ Nevertheless, 1141 is an important date in the history of the town and other versions of this text put a clear light on what occurred. Thus, a manuscript composed in the middle of the 14th century tells us that *En l'an de M e C XLI giteron los homes de Montpellier en G. de Montpellier de la vila et s'en anet a Latas, e duret la batalha ii ans. El coms de Barsalona rendet li la vila, per assetge. Et adonc valian X favas I denier*.¹² This constitutes a brief summary of the emergence of the first consulate in Montpellier when, following a rebellion of the *burgenses*, Guilhem VI was expelled from the town and has to withdraw into Lattes for about two years. He only recovered its possession with the help of Raymond Bérenger IV, count of Barcelona, and after having besieged Montpellier, which explains the expensive cost of the beans at this time. If this episode remains obscure, we know that during the absence of Guilhem VI, the leaders of this rebellion did not hesitate to call themselves *consules* and to act as the very first consuls of the town.¹³ Thus, 1141 is the birth date of the consulate of Montpellier even if this first attempt of establishing an urban self-governing was erased by Guilhem VI in 1143 when he recovered the town. Then, the Guilhems seem to have imposed a

9. "And it was took the Madieryras' castle". AMM. AA 9, f. 72.

10. "And in this year the men of Montpellier took Madieryras, which is in Larzac, and demolished the castle and put fire on the moat because the castle's lord robbed on the way". BNF. Manuscrits français, Ms. 14507, f. 48. But the capture of Madières only appears in the list of 'antiquities and events'.

11. "10 broad beans cost one penny in Montpellier". AMM. AA 9, f. 70v.

12. "In the year 1141 the men of Montpellier expelled G. de Montpellier out of the town, and he came to Lates, and the battle persisted two years. The count of Barcelona took the town throughout a siege. And in the time 10 broad beans cost one penny". BIUM. Section de médecine, H 119, f. 82.

13. In a letter issued by Innocent II, the pope speaks about *qui ipsius loci consules appellantur* and excommunicate them; see: *Bullaire de l'Église de Maguelone*, ed. Jean Baptiste Rouquette, Augustin Villemagne. Montpellier: Valat, 1911: I, 54 (doc. No. 33).



damnatio memoriae explaining why the word itself of consuls disappeared from the charters until 1206. But the memory of this first rebellion did never vanish from the minds of Montpellier's citizens and reappears here like a phantom rediscovered, like an almost forgotten remembrance suddenly revealed under the price of the beans. Oblivion against remembrance, the equation of Montpellier's urban memory is much more complicated than one can first imagine.

Indeed, the *Petit Thalamus* does not impose a memory which would be fixed from the middle of the thirteenth century but rebuild it permanently according to the social and political developments which it is the reflection. Conscious and planned work of a consulate that accomplishes a flashback on its origins, one generation after its birth and once its own power firmly established on the city, the *Petit Thalamus* does not simply record the history of Montpellier: by forging, in a written way which may seem to us an artificial one, a common memory, it creates the town itself as a *universitas* and plays a decisive role in the emergence of an urban consciousness. In addition to the *Commune Clôture* —which refers both to the oldest collective high wall that surrounded the town from the 1180's and to the communal institution which is in charge of building it— which realised the physical and material unit of Montpellier,¹⁴ the *Petit Thalamus*, by contributing to the mental unity of the citizens, has been one of the most important pieces in the creation of the town itself, whose importance is equal to the great seal of the consulate. Thus, it is a keystone in the construction of this balance, fragile and always called into question, that represents a medieval town.

What allows us to plunge in depth in the making of Montpellier urban memory is that no less than nine manuscripts of the *Petit Thalamus* have been preserved, written between around 1240 and 1334.¹⁵ Contrary to many urban chronicles for which only one copy is preserved and pass down the official version of a civic memory controlled by the urban authorities, the *Petit Thalamus* presents a very peculiar perspective which allows us to study the memorial deformations accomplished by a consulate which considers itself as the essential foundation of the urban identity. This point immediately leads us to the question of the language used by the chronicle: if we still possess two versions written in Latin, both of them are very short and unfinished, containing mainly the names of the consuls, just as if it was a desperate attempt to establish the legitimacy of the consulate onto Roman and Latin basis. But, such an attempt did fail, even if the AA 9 manuscript kept some traces of it for the very first years in the way of giving the date. For instance, the first item fitting with 1204 begins by *Anno dominice Incarnationis millesimo ducentesimo*

14. Montpellier was originally composed from two distinctive areas which were Montpelliéret under the lordship of the bishop of Maguelone, and Montpellier itself ruled by the Guilhems. The *Commune Clôture* was built to circle these two parts. See: Fabre, Ghislaine; Lochar, Thierry. *Montpellier, la ville médiévale*. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1992: 112-125.

15. AMM. AA 9 (1334-1423); AMM. AA 4 (separated folios in Latin inserted in the *Grand Thalamus*); BNF. Manuscrits français, Ms. 11795 (*circa* 1250); BNF. Nouvelles acquisitions françaises, Ms. 4337 (1261); BNF. Manuscrits français, Ms. 14507 (1270-1280); BRB. Manuscrits, Ms. 7082 (13th century); BMN. Manuscrits, Ms. 254 (end of the 13th century); BIUM. Section médecine, H 119 (middle of the 14th century); ANF. J 339 (doc. No. 23) (separated folios in Latin).



*quarto, foron cossols...*¹⁶ but it does not last for long as from 1207, the items begin by *En l'an de...* using hereafter the vernacular language as if the consulate realised that using Latin was a pathetic way of reinforcing its own power. This question of the language used in the *Petit Thalamus* is an essential one as it seems to be the oldest urban chronicle in Western Europe written in vernacular and not in Latin. From this point of view, the situation in Montpellier seems very different from Italian cities where the first chronicles—including *Annales Januenses* by Andrea Caffaro¹⁷—were deliberately written in Latin and where the use of the vernacular language does not intervene before the very end of the 13th century or the beginning of the 14th, about one century later than in Montpellier. Of course, it may be explained by the different status of the vernacular language in Southern France and in Italy: whereas Occitan has been used as a literary language by the troubadours in the course of the 12th century, it is not before the beginning of the 14th century that Tuscan won its spurs with Dante Alighieri and was then considered noble enough to record the story of the city. But, in the case of Montpellier, one may evoke a more fundamental reason: in Northern Italy, as recently emphasized by Carrie E. Beneš,¹⁸ writing the story of the city is also, and maybe mainly, a way of rediscovering the Roman past of the town; choosing to write in Latin is thus evident. But in this new town of Montpellier, deprived of any Roman origin, such a matter does not exist at all: when the urban chronicle begins, it does not talk about the past simply because Montpellier did not exist in the past. So the question of the origins is not as fundamental for Montpellier as for Genes, Milan or Sienna. As a consequence, the consuls did not have to apply an antique model and were completely free to invent their own way of writing, not the legendary story of the town, but the present one and they did it by choosing vernacular language to forge a civic identity which was based much more on the civic recent fights than on a Roman myth. Only in a town without any Roman past, could this model be created and it is in fact because of the youth of Montpellier that the consuls feel free to invent this new approach of the urban history.

3. From a seigniorial to an urban memory

The oldest historical memory of Montpellier is clearly a seigniorial one linked to the lordship of the Guilhems, and some important events which concerned this dynasty are carefully recorded in the lists of 'antiquities and events' but disappeared in the AA 9 manuscript. For instance, in 1184, the birth of Raymond Gaucelm (IV),

16. AMM. AA 9, f. 71.

17. The best general study of this work is: Balbi, Giovanna Petti. *Caffaro e la cronachistica Genovese*. Genoa: Tilgher, 1970.

18. Beneš, Carrie E. *Urban Legends. Civic Identity and the Classical Past in Northern Italy (1250-1350)*. Pennsylvania University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 2011.



son of Sybille and Raymond Gaucelm III, lord of Lunel, appeared in these lists¹⁹ because Sybille was the elder daughter of Guilhem VII. Yet, at this moment, the lord of Montpellier, Guilhem VIII, has only one child and heir, Marie, born in 1182, and the newborn Raymond Gaucelm represents the only grandson of Guilhem VII and thus a possible heir in the case the young Marie would die. But such a birth, whose mention can be understood in the context of the succession of the Guilhems, does not have any importance once this succession solved in favour of the kings of Aragon and is not recorded in the AA 9 manuscript, being erased from the urban memory. The complex question of how Pierre II of Aragon became lord of Montpellier precisely led to some memorial reconstructions that the different manuscripts allow us to follow. Guilhem VIII had contracted in 1174 a wedding with Eudoxie Comnène, a little niece of the Byzantine Emperor, from which was only born one girl, named Marie. But, lately, he repudiated his first wife and married in 1187 Agnès of Castille who gave him eight children including the future Guilhem IX. This union, so important for the future of the dynasty, is fully inscribed in the ancient versions: as an example, we can quote the copy kept in Bruxelles which writes that *en mai pres en G. de Montpeslier sa moller na Unes a Barsalona*²⁰ whereas the wedding with Eudoxie Comnène is not even cited. Nevertheless, in spite of his requests to the pope, Guilhem VIII failed to obtain from the Church the recognition of his marriage with Agnès de Castille and any legitimization of their children.²¹ This decision allowed Marie to claim herself as the only heir of Montpellier and, when she married with Pierre II of Aragon in July 1204, it opened the path to the annexation of the town to the lands of the crown of Aragon. After such an event, the mention of a second wedding between Guilhem VIII and Agnès of Castille was not only unnecessary but clearly awkward as it ran the risk to reveal that the choice of Guilhem VIII has been negated and that the transmission of the lordship has been put in question. As a natural consequence, the mention of this wedding has not been selected in the AA 9 manuscript and, thus, not retained in the civic memory. Nevertheless, the consuls simply forgot to cancel another union, the one of Raymond Roger Trencavel, viscount of Béziers, with Agnès, daughter of Guilhem VIII and Agnès de Castille.²² Another example of this ‘phantoms of remembrance’ which appeared in this text.

19. *En l'an de M et C LXXXIII fon natz en R. Gaucelm, fil de la filla d'en G. de Montpeslier*. BNF. Manuscrits français, Ms. 7082, f. 13v. On the wedding between Raymond Gaucelm and Sybille, see: Vidal, Henri. “Les mariages dans la famille des Guilhems, seigneurs de Montpellier”. *Revue d'Histoire du Droit*, 62 (1984): 231-244.

20. “In May, 6. de Montpellier took his wife, Agnes in Barcelona”. BNF. Manuscrits français, Ms. 7082, f. 13v-14.

21. It is by the bull *Per venerabilem*, issued in 1202, that Innocent III refused this legitimization. See: Vidal, Henri. “Aspects montpelliérains de la bulle ‘Per Venerabilem’”, *Montpellier et les Guilhems*, ed. Jean-Mari Carbosse. Montpellier: Presses de la Faculté de Droit et Science Politique de Montpellier, 2012: 165-186; Vidal, Henri. “Aspects montpelliérains de la bulle ‘Per Venerabilem’”. *Recueil de mémoires et travaux publiés par la Société d'histoire de droit et des institutions des anciens pays de droit écrit*, 15 (1991): 49-65.

22. *L'an MCCIII en setembre mori m° G. de Monspelier et lo vescomte de Bezes pres sa filha per molher l'an meteys*. AMM. AA 9, f. 70v.



Yet, the official and most recent version imposed by the consulate was supposed to be clear and shows a conscious wish to base an urban identity on the unity of the town by concealing the divisions which occurred during the brief interlude between the death of Guilhem VIII and the seizure of power realised by Pierre II of Aragon. For the *Petit Thalamus*, Guilhem VIII's union with Agnès of Castille did never take place, nor the fact that his elder son, Guilhem IX, ruled Montpellier between 1202 and 1204. And the AA 9 manuscript gives no place to what has been sometimes called 'the revolution of 1204'.²³ Even if the word 'revolution' may be called into question, what happened in 1204 was everything but a quiet succession from one dynasty to another and the urban elites did play an important role in this movement, as prove many elements totally hidden by the latest copy: indeed, the only reference included in the AA 9 version is that the king of Aragon married Marie de Montpellier in July 1204,²⁴ imposing the idea of a logical and natural succession and forgetting the existence of Guilhem IX. But, older versions had kept a different memory of the events and of the internal breaches of the urban elites. The Bruxelles's manuscript, after having recalled the wedding of Marie de Montpellier, adds: *Et en auel an fon barrejatx l'alberc d'en B. Lambert, e [de] maistre Gui et d'en Uc de Tornamira*.²⁵ It clearly reveals that the king of Aragon could rely on some families belonging to the urban elites who took the opportunity of putting an end to the Guilhems' lordship. Indeed, Bérenger Lambert has been the main officer of Guilhem VIII, acting as his *bayle*, and master Gui Francesc was a very well-known jurist whose presence on the side of Guilhem VIII is testified.²⁶ These three men also happened to be members of the regency council instituted by Guilhem VIII to guarantee the transmission of power to his son and were forced to exile in June 1204.²⁷ The final victory of Pierre II of Aragon then appears to be the consequence of an internal opposition to the Guilhems and their councillors whose houses were seized and, in a classical phenomenon of *damnatio memoriae* commonly observed in Italian cities in such circumstances,²⁸ intended to be destroyed. In fact, it seems

23. Vidal, Henri. "L'Aragon et la révolution..." : 43-60.

24. *L'an MCCIII lo rey d'Aragon pres per molher madona Maria de Montpellier en julh*. AMM. AA 9, f. 70v.

25. "And in this year B, Lambert's, Master Gui and Uc de Tornamira's houses were destroyed". BNF. Manuscrits français, Ms. 7082, f. 14-14v.

26. On master Gui Francesc, see: Gouron, André. "Autour de Placentin à Montpellier: Maître Gui et Pierre de Cardona". *Studia Gratiana*, 19 (1976): 337-354.

27. All of them are quoted in an act delivered by Pierre II of Aragon on the 15th of June 1204 by which he swears to respect their banishment. Bérenger Lambert was not the sole member of his family to be forced in exile as the same act contains also the names of Bernard Lambert and his son, of Raymond Lambert, son of deceased Pons Lambert and Guillaume Lambert, brother of Bérenger. Thus, the whole Lamberts clan had to flee from the town on this occasion. This charter is published by: Germain, Alexandre. *Histoire de la commune de Montpellier*. Montpellier: J. Martel Ainé, 1851: I, 317-319.

28. See for instance the case of Bologna studied by Jacques Heers: Heers, Jacques. *Espaces publics, espaces privés dans la ville. 'Le Liber terminorum' de Bologne (1294)*. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1984; and, for a more general approach, see: Heers, Jacques. "En Italie centrale: les paysages construits, reflets d'une politique urbaine", *D'une ville à l'autre. Structures matérielles et organisation de l'espace dans les villes européennes (XIII^e-XVI^e siècles)*, Jean Claude Maire Vigueur, ed. Rome: École Française de Rome, 1989: 279-322.



to have been nothing more than a symbolic destruction as the buildings where in fact reused in a way that imposed oblivion on the names of these families but emphasized at the same time both the king of Aragon and the consulate. The house of the Lamberts was the nucleus of the first consular house,²⁹ becoming then the symbol of the triumph of the new consulate over banished families who were involved in seigniorial power, whereas the house of the Touremires served as a royal residence: the birth of Jacques, son of Marie de Montpellier and Pierre of Aragon, in this place may be seen as emblematic of the substitution of the Guilhems by the kings of Aragon. By sharing the spoils of the Lamberts and the Tournemires, two preeminent families linked to the Guilhems, the king of Aragon and the consulate erased not only the memory of these two specific families but also the remembrance of Guilhem IX's brief interlude. But such a process of *damnatio memoriae* which was so essential in the 13th century and has, in an apparent paradox which seems similar to the reference of Amaleq in the Old Testament,³⁰ to be claimed by the consulate, has, on the contrary, to be forgotten in the 14th century when the urban identity pretended to conceal the internal divisions that led to the consulate. The consuls, then, forged the myth of a pacific emergence of this institution granted by the king of Aragon and definitely condemned to oblivion the names of the Lamberts and the Tournemires. More deeply, the *Petit Thalamus* imposes the false idea that both the charter of customs and the consulate were delivered in 1204 by Pierre II and Marie de Montpellier to reward the urban elites. All the manuscripts, including the most ancient ones, began in 1204 by these words, written with a red ink: *Aysso es lo comessamen del consolat* ("this is the beginning of the Consulate"), immediately followed by the names of twelve people presented as the first consuls of the town. But, in fact, these men never really bore this title: amongst these twelve so-called consuls, seven are the *probi homines* elected in June 1204 to correct the customs of Montpellier³¹ and the additional charter of the customs, issued in June 1205 only speaks of *duodecim probi et legales viri Montispessulani electi ad consulendam communitatem Montispessulani*.³² And it is only in July 1206 that the representatives of the community are described as consuls.³³ Nor the *probi homines* of 1204, nor the ones of 1205 were really consuls and it is only by a conscious forgery that they bear this title in the *Petit Thalamus* in order to support the myth of consulate's peaceful origins. By claiming, precisely through this text, that its birth date is 1204, it links its emergence both to the official proclamation of the customs and to the change of rulers which is so decisive in the reorientation of the civic memory.

29. Fabre, Ghislaine; Lochard, Thierry. *Montpellier, la ville médiévale...*: 126-127.

30. Which says to erase the remembrance of Amaleq but concludes that it should not be forgotten and inscribes the name itself of Amaleq in the Bible while claiming that this name must disappear; quoted by: Le Goff, Jacques. *Histoire et mémoire*. Paris: Gallimard, 1986: 132.

31. Charter of Pierre II of Aragon and Marie de Montpellier issued on the 15th of June 1204; published by: Germain, Alexandre. *Histoire de la commune de Montpellier...*: I, 317-319.

32. *Thalamus parvus: le Petit Thalamus de Montpellier*, ed. Société Archéologique de Montpellier. Montpellier: J. Martel Ainé, 1840: 64 (article IX).

33. Germain, Alexandre. *Histoire de la commune de Montpellier...*: I, 319-320.



4. A town for two kingdoms: Montpellier between Aragon and France

That Pierre II of Aragon became in 1204 lord of Montpellier is a capital event in the history of the town, whose chronicle is partly the reflection. Indeed, the most ancient versions demonstrate that, under the Guilhems' rule, Montpellier was deeply inserted into a Languedocian space by paying a great attention to the different episodes of the 'great southerner war' that opposed for over a century the counts of Toulouse to the ones of Barcelona and their allies, including the Trencavels and the Guilhems.³⁴ For instance, the list of 'antiquities and events' included in the H 119 manuscript records for 1181 the capture of Bernard Aton VI, viscount of Agde and Nîmes by Raymond Gaucelm, lord of Lunel, and the fact that he has to sell his rights on Nîmes to Raymond V, count of Toulouse, in order to pay his ransom³⁵ or the death of Ermengarde, viscountess of Narbonne, which occurred in 1194.³⁶ But, such informations which can be easily understood in the context of the 12th century, especially if we remember that Guilhem VIII was a member of the alliance created in 1181 by Raymond Bérenger IV, count of Provence, against the count of Toulouse, became totally meaningless after the disappearance of the Guilhems' dynasty, and disappeared from the AA 9 manuscript written in the 1330s in a moment where the relationships between the town and its new lords—the kings of Majorque—were far more important than the remembrance of a seigniorial past. In fact, around 1330, a drastic selection of the events was made by the notary of the consulate in charge of this chronicle who mainly chose to retain those who had a direct link with the Catalan lands or the Aragonese crown. Apart from the initial date of the seizure of Barcelona already analysed, the AA 9 manuscript carefully keeps the memory of military expeditions led by the counts of Barcelona against the Muslims during the 12th century: it concerns the Ibiza's first conquest made under the leadership of Raymond Bérenger III in 1114-1115³⁷ as well as the takeover of Almeria in October 1147 and of Tortosa in 1149 made by Raymond Bérenger IV, count of Barcelona and Provence.³⁸ Nevertheless, such events have been only recorded due to the involvement of the Guilhems in the struggle against Muslims: Guilhem V was present during the raid against Ibiza and Guilhem VI took a decisive part in the seizure of Tortosa. For this latter case, even before the victory, Guilhem VI had

34. For a synthetic view of this war, see: Macé, Laurent. *Les comtes de Toulouse et leur entourage XII^e-XIII^e siècles*. Toulouse: Privat, 2000: 23-33.

35. *En l'an de M e C Lxxxi, pres en R. Gaucelm lo vescomte de Nemze, e tenc lo pres ii ans. Et a cap de ii ans, compret lo coms R. Nemze p[er] sa rezmo[n]t*. BIUM. Section de médecine, H 119, f. 82.

36. *Et en aquel an mori la dona N'Esmergartz de Narbona*. BIUM. Section de médecine, H 119, f. 82v. About Ermengarde, see: Cheyette, Frédéric Laurence. *Ermengarde de Narbonne et le monde des troubadours*. Paris: Perrin, 2006.

37. *L'an MCXIII lo rey d'Aragon en Jacme pres Malhorca*. AMM. AA 9, f. 70v. There is an obvious confusion between this expedition and the later one led by Jacques of Aragon against Majorque in 1229 which is yet correctly recorded in this manuscript under this year. The other manuscripts did not make this confusion, simply attributing this attack to Christians without any other precision.

38. *L'an MCXLVIII, lo comte de Prohensa pres Almaria*. [...] *L'an MCXLIX, lo dich comte pres Tortosa de Sarrazis*. AMM. AA 9, f.70v.



received in 1136 in fiefdom from the count of Barcelona the third part of the town to be conquered³⁹ and, in his final will, he left it to his second son who took the name of Guilhem of Tortosa. In the 1330s, the remembrance of these victories was kept, not because it highlighted the Guilhem's glorious past but because they were part of the reconquest led by the ancestors of the Aragon kings. The record of these events was unmodified but their significance, from a memorial point of view, completely changed to celebrate the Catalan dynasty. In another case—the birth of Jacques of Aragon—the reorientation of the chronicle is more subtle: whereas the H 119 writes *lo primier dia de febrer e fon a divenres nasquet en Jacme rei d'Aragon lo fill de la regina dona de Montpellier*,⁴⁰ the AA 9 manuscript prefers to say that *et aquel an a l'e febrer nasquet m° Jacme filh de m° Peire rey d'Aragon*.⁴¹ If, in the first version, the essential thing was to indicate the filiation between Jacques of Aragon and the last heiress of the Guilhems, Marie of Montpellier, pointing out his legitimacy to rule the town, the most recent one draws attention on the fact that Jacques was the son and heir of the Aragon king. A symbolic detail of a substantial reorientation of the civic memory from the lands of the Guilhems towards the crown of Aragon. Indeed, from 1204, the chronicle pays a greater attention to various events which occurred in the Spanish kingdoms, and not only in Aragon, in connection with the reconquest over Muslims. Oddly, the AA 9 manuscript neglected to recall for 1212 the famous battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in which Pierre II of Aragon was involved and only retained the takeover of Calatrava and Baeza, maybe also because French crusaders were present under the spiritual leadership of Arnaud Amaury, archbishop of Narbonne.⁴² It is quite surprising as the mention of this battle is present in the others manuscripts under the date of 1212:⁴³ why Las Navas de Tolosa has finally not be retained remains, for the moment, a complete mystery all the more that, on the contrary, the chronicle keeps a complete record of the conquests realised by his son Jacques of Aragon. Of course, the fact that Jacques was born in Montpellier and that he made several stays in his home town may explain the attention paid by the *Petit Thalamus* to this sovereign who conquered Majorque and the kingdom of Valence.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the relationships between the king and Montpellier were far from being unworried, even if the final version of the text presents a very

39. Published by Alexandre Germain and Camille Chabaneau in: *Liber Instrumentorum Memorialium, cartulaire des Guilhems...* : 284-285 (fasc. 2).

40. "The first day of February, which it was Friday, James of Aragon, son of the Queen Dame of Montpelier, was born". BIUM. Section de médecine, H 119, f. 119.

41. "And in this year, the first February, James, son of the Lord Peter King of Aragon, born". AMM. AA 9, f. 71.

42. *En aquest an, lo primier jorn de julh, fo preza Calatrava et Beda*. AMM. AA 9, f. 71v. There is an obvious mistake as Calatrava and Baeza were not taken on the same day. The size of Calatrava took place before the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa and the one of Baeza after.

43. *En l'an de M et CC XII, fon preza Calatrava lo primier jorn de jull. Et apres tres setmanas fon facha la batalha d'Espanha e fes la lo rei d'Aragon, el rei de Castella, el rei de Navarra e lur hostz*. BNF. Manuscrit français, Ms. 11795, f. 67v.

44. *Lo II jorn de genoyer m° Jacme, rey d'Aragon, pres Malhorca*. AMM. AA 9, f. 73v. ; *Aquest an, en setembre, lo XXVIII jorn, m° Jacme, rey d'Aragon, pres Valencia*. AMM. AA 9 f. 74v.



peaceful image of these relations. For instance, under the year 1243, the AA 9 manuscript simply notes the birth in Montpellier of Jacques, son of Jacques of Aragon and future king of Majorque⁴⁵ but completely forget to explain why the king and the queen, Yolande of Hungary, were present at Montpellier at that time. In fact, the arrival of the royal couple was not at all a fortuitous one: in 1243, the alleged heir of the kingdom was Alphonse, the elder son of the king. But, in order to preserve the interests of his second son, Pierre, Jacques planned in 1241 a first sharing of his territories, reserving the Balears, the counties of Roussillon and Cerdagne and the lordship of Montpellier to Pierre. Pierre, a three years old child at this time, was present in Montpellier and the coming of the royal family was intended to prepare such a succession. There is not any real doubt about the significance of this arrival as a complete account of the ceremony has been included in the two Latin versions of the *Petit Thalamus*.⁴⁶ on Saint Paul and Peter's feast day, the consuls and the whole people of Montpellier swore a loyalty oath not only to Jacques of Aragon but, in prevision of his death, to the queen and eventually to their son, Pierre, that they recognised as their future lord.⁴⁷ Such an oath has obviously to be carefully preserved in the second half of the 13th century even if Pierre finally became king of Aragon and Jacques, born in 1243, lord of Montpellier. But, during the 14th century, not only did this oath became ineffective but also embarrassing as it reminded to the consuls their obvious submission to the king in a time where the balance of power between the town and his sovereign has been modified in favour of the consulate. Of course, the fact that the consuls had to swear a loyalty oath remains unquestioned but such an oath had normally only to be sworn once when the new lord came to take possession of the town and the consuls were quite jealous of their prerogatives. In February 1277, after Jacques of Aragon's death, his son Jacques went to Montpellier to receive this oath: he swore to respect the customs and privileges of the town, and the consuls and the people swore to be faithful to him.⁴⁸ But, this was made on their knees (*flexis genibus*) which immediately provoked a rumour amongst the people of Montpellier and forced the king to deliver a charter pointing out that this does not imply an allegiance or a subjection link but

45. *Aquest an, la vigilia de Pantacosta, nasquet a Montpellier M^o Jacme, lo bon rey.* AMM. AA 9, f. 75.

46. ANF. J 339 (doc. No. 23); AMM. AA 4.

47. The exact text of this oath is preserved in AMM. AA 4, f. 86: *Ego, homo, juro vobis, domino Jacobo, Dei gracia Regi Aragonum et regnis Majoricie et Valentie, comiti Barchinonensis et Urgelli et domino Montispessulani, quod ego salvabo et custodiam vitam vestram et membra vestra et dominacionem vestram, et semper ero fidelis vobis in tota vita vestra, et post vos, domine regine Yoles, uxori vestre, quamdiu vixerit et viduitatem legitime observabit et non ingreditur domum religiosam, et post attendam ad Petrum filium vestrum. Habebo ipsum in dominium meum et Montispessulani vel alium filium et dicte domine regine, de quo vos hoc in mandaveritis verbo vel testamento, nec admittam vel recipiam alium in dominium Montispessulani in hoc facerem, de voluntate vestra vel filii vestri et dicte domine regine Yoles qui esset dominus Montispessulani et cui teneri obedire de voluntate vestra ut dictum est, salvis consuetudinibus et libertatibus Montispessulani a vobis laudatis.*

48. *E en aquel an, juret lo pobol de Monpeylier a mosenhor en Jacme son filh, rey de Malhorgas, e el juret las costumaz.* AMM. AA 9, f. 79.



nothing more than a simple loyalty oath.⁴⁹ A more serious matter opposed Montpellier to Jacques of Aragon between 1252 and 1258. In 1252, the king tried to confiscate to his own benefit a duty called the ‘obols of Lattes’ which was, at this time, withdrawn by the consuls on the goods disembarked at the harbour of Lattes. But the consuls opposed vigorously to this measure, elected without the king’s consent two *bayles* and, summoned to present themselves to the king’s court at Barcelona, simply refused. To put an end to this conflict, Jacques of Aragon had to come to Montpellier in December 1258 and, in front of the entire people of the town gathered before the Franciscan’s convent, to deliver a grace letter for all the acts committed against his authority. This was followed by a new exchange of oaths between the sovereign and the inhabitants of the town.⁵⁰ From this succession of events, the AA 9 manuscript only records a simple sentence: *Et adoncs la composition entre l rey en Jacme e la vila*.⁵¹ But the older versions are less allusive: while the Latin text clearly speaks of a peace concluded between the king and the *universitas* and of the respective oaths sworn on this occasion,⁵² the Bruxelles’ manuscript evokes the beginning of the conflict and the fact that the consulate’s bell called the men of the town to arms.⁵³ Such a decision which could only have occurred under the control of the consuls was nothing less but a rebellion against royal power: once again, it became in the 14th century too embarrassing to be officially recalled as it constituted an offense to royal majesty. It was then erased from the civic memory and hidden behind the pacified vision of a simple arrangement between the king and the town. This seems to be quite a regular topic of this memorial reconstruction: concealing the urban traumas in favour of a peaceful and united history of the town.

But, from year to year, the chronicle is also the reflection of the growing influence of the French king over the southern lands. While the Capétiens had been completely ignored during the 12th century—not even to talk of the 11th century—they made their appearance with Philippe Auguste whose death, in 1223, constitutes the very first mention of a king of France in the *Petit Thalamus*.⁵⁴ Still, it remains a shy one as nothing is told about his life, not even about the conquest of Normandy which is doubtlessly the highlight of this reign. It is the evident proof of the absence of real influence of the French king in this area before the 1220s and of their inability to compensate the king of Aragon’s power. But from then on, the chronicle carefully records each death of a king of France, the name of his immediate successor and,

49. Published by Alexandre Germain: Germain, Alexandre. *Histoire de la commune de Montpellier...*: II, 348-349.

50. Germain, Alexandre. *Histoire de la commune de Montpellier...*: II, 331-341.

51. “The composition between the King James and the town”. AMM. AA 9, f. 76v.

52. *Et eodem anno fecit pacem dominus Jacobus Rex Aragonum cum consulibus et tota universitate Montipessulani et idem dominus rex laudavit sigillatim consuetudines et libertates Montispessulani et fecit fieri juramentum fidelitatis ab universis habitatoribus Montispessulani qui erant etatis legitime ad jurandum sibi, et post dies suos, domino Jacobo filio suo*. AMM. AA 4, f. 87.

53. *En l’an de M et CC LII demanda lo rei Jacme rei d’Aragon las mezallas de Latas e lendeman de l’Apareccion apres cobreran lus li home de Monpeslier la cloca dels armatz*. BNF. Manuscrits français, Ms. 7082, f. 17v.

54. *Aquest an, a XVII de julh, mori M^o Ph., rey de Fransa*. AMM. AA 9, f. 73.



on some occasions, the birth of the elder son of the king. Not only are the deaths of the French sovereigns written down but also their main actions, especially if they are related to Languedoc. In a sense, the first real event led by a king of France which appears in the *Petit Thalamus* is the siege of Avignon by Louis VIII in 1226: the chronicle retains in a single sentence the siege itself, its major consequences -the capture of the town and the symbolic destruction of its walls- and the death of the king on his way back to Paris.⁵⁵ But such a sentence contains nothing less than the annexation of Languedoc to the French Crown. The *Petit Thalamus* is also the reflection of the Mediterranean tropism of Louis IX and his obvious interest for the Mediterranean shores of his kingdom. As an evidence, an event as important as the arrival of the king at Aigues-Mortes in 1249 in order to embark for Egypt could not be unnoticed⁵⁶ but the Latin version is more explicit by explaining that the consuls sent to Louis IX an embassy at Aigues-Mortes and that these delegates managed to obtain from the king some privileges which protected Montpellier's trade from the new concurrency of Aigues-Mortes.⁵⁷ The king of France had then become a major player in Languedoc policies whose influence could not be ignored any more, neither in the facts nor in the way to write the urban history. From this moment on, the reorientation of the civic identity from an Aragonese horizon to a French one becomes clear, especially when the only figure able to overshadow the one of Louis IX, Jacques of Aragon, disappeared in 1276.⁵⁸ Long before the final acquisition of the town by Philippe VI in 1349, the *Petit Thalamus* has already recorded the fact that Montpellier was looking more toward Paris than toward Barcelona.

5. Conclusions

One of the main interests of this chronicle is to have been preserved in different manuscripts written between the 12th and the 14th century, each one presenting its own version. It offers a unique occasion to analyse the phenomena of memorial reconstruction led by the official history of the town in accordance to political requirements, phenomena which unveil a certain doubt in the definition of the urban community and some difficulties to create a civic identity. A town deprived of any Roman past —which offers in fact to Montpellier a great freedom in the way to tell its own history and to choose vernacular language rather than Latin—, also freed from any figure of a count or a bishop, Montpellier does not really build its identity on the Guilhems' memory which is little by little put into oblivion. Of

55. *Aquest an, en junh, M^o Loys, rey de Fransa, mes lo cety davant Avinhon et lo pres et derroquet los murs et pueys en setembre mori a Montpansier*. AMM. AA 9, f. 73. On this episode, see: Zerner, Monique. "Le siège d'Avignon par Louis VIII (10 juin-10 septembre 1226)", *Avignon au Moyen Âge. Textes et documents*, Hervé Aliquot, Bernard Guillemain, eds. Avignon: Aubanel, 1988: 43-52.

56. *E aquel an passet d'Aygas Mortas otra mar Lodoïc rey de Fransa*. AMM. AA 9, f. 75v.

57. AMM. AA 4, f. 85v.

58. *La vigilia de Sant Jacme mori a Valencia en abit del Cistel M^o Jacme, rey d'Aragon*. AMM. AA 9, f. 77v.



course, some glorious kings of Aragon can offer replacement characters, especially the one of Jacques of Aragon born in Montpellier, but such a memory was fragile and awkward once the king of France became the master of Languedoc and was eventually unable to create an appropriate civic identity. And finally, these constant writings and rewritings of a same material reveals that the only foundation of the civic identity is the consulate itself which used to materialise its identity the *ecclesia matrix* of Notre-Dame-des-Tables, the great seal of the consulate and, from the beginning of the 13th century, a memorial reconstruction and manipulation whose keystone is precisely the rewriting of its origins.



IS THERE A MODEL OF POLITICAL IDENTITY IN THE SMALL CITIES OF PORTUGAL IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES? A PRELIMINARY THEORETICAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

The concept of small cities adopted in this article corresponds to urban centres with low relevance in the Portuguese political system. To identify these territorial communities, several classification criteria are suggested (namely the legal status and the political profile of the town) that, after being exploited in monographic studies, may allow conceiving an interpretative model. The most important criterion discussed in this article is the political culture that the *concelhos* (“municipalities”) preserved in the dialogue they established with the crown. It can be asserted that for the 14th century we have not identified any difference between the discourse delivered by the most important and the less important municipalities in this institutional relationship. This is not the case for the 15th century. Indeed, while small cities keep merely defending the legal order, large cities created an autonomous political identity.

KEYWORDS

Portugal, Small Cities, Political Identity, Political Culture.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Lusitania, Parvae Civitates, Identitas Politica, Cultura Politica.

1. Introduction: operative concepts

One could argue that the question that guides this article reflects a circular historiographical construction, particularly detached from external elements inscribed in reality. For this reason, a study that proposes to combine two categories—urban identity¹ and small Portuguese medieval cities—must be preceded by a clear definition of concepts.² Urban identity means the representation that a territorial community produces and conveys about itself. In the present article, to investigate the dissemination of that image I will look at the discourse produced by social actors that have political legitimacy to speak on behalf of a group³ and that formalise it in

1. The topic of urban identity in the medieval period has been widely addressed by European historiography. Because it would be impossible to mention all the articles that somehow address this topic, here are some references to edited volumes, projects and seminars, some of which are mentioned further along in this article: Crouzet-Pavan, Élisabeth; Lecuppre-Desjardin, Élodie, eds. *Villes de Flandre et d'Italie (XIII^e-XVI^e siècle). Les enseignements d'une comparaison*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2008; Chittolini, Giorgio; Johaneck, Peter, coords. *Aspetti e componenti dell'identità urbana in Italia e in Germania (secoli XIV-XVI) / Aspekte und Komponenten der städtischen Identität in Italien und Deutschland (14-16. Jahrhundert)*. Bologna-Berlin: Istituto Trentino di Cultura, 2000; Boone, Marc; Stabel, Peter, eds. *Shaping Urban Identity in Late Medieval Europe*. Louvain: Garant, 2000; Boone, Marc; Lecuppre-Desjardin, Élodie; Sossion, Jean Pierre, eds. *Le verbe, l'image et les représentations de la société urbaine au Moyen Age. Actes du colloque international tenu à Marche-en-Famenne du 24 au 27 octobre 2001*. Anvers-Apeldoorn: Garant, 2002; Asenjo, María, ed. *Oligarchy and Patronage in late Medieval Spanish Urban Society*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009; Barrio, Juan Antonio, coord. "Espacios de Identidad Política urbana en la Península Ibérica". *Anales de la Universidad de Alicante. Historia Medieval*, 16 (2009-2010): 39-276. For relevant research projects on the topic, see: *Identidad política urbana. La construcción de modelos de identidad en las ciudades de Aragón, Castilla y Navarra (1350-180)* (HUM206-01371), funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Government of Spain. The project *Fundamentos de identidad política: la construcción de identidades políticas urbanas en la península ibérica en el tránsito a la modernidad* (HAR2009-08946)—also funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Government of Spain—has produced outputs, both in the form of individual publications by the researchers and presentations in international seminars, some of which are being prepared for publication: Jara, José Antonio; Martin, Georges; Alfonso, Isabel, eds. *Construir la identidad en la Edad Media. Poder y memoria en la Castilla de los siglos VII a XV*. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2010. In Portugal, see the international seminars organised by the *Centro Interdisciplinar de História, Culturas e Sociedades da Universidade de Évora* in 2010 (*I^o Seminário Internacional Categorias Sociais e Mobilidade Urbana na Península Ibérica no Final da Idade Média*) and in 2011 (*II^o Seminário Internacional Imagem, Identidade e Memória da cidade na Idade Média*), as well as the publication resulting from the first scientific meeting: Vilar, Hermínia de Vasconcelos; Lopes, Filomena de Barros, eds. *Categorias Sociais e Mobilidade Urbana na Baixa idade Média. Entre o Islão e a Cristandade*. Évora: Edições Colibri-Centro Interdisciplinar de História, Cultura e Sociedades, 2012.

2. The need (or rather the obligation) to use categories created in different scientific areas only after careful analysis of the scientific context and of the evolution those categories undergo inside the disciplines of origin, is masterfully argued in the excellent theoretical work produced by Alicia Montero: Montero, Alicia Inés. "Identidad e identidades: La identidad política en la historia urbana medieval. Balance historiográfico y perspectivas de análisis". *Estudios Medievales Hispánicos*, 1 (2012): 121-142. The fact that concepts are absorbed by historiography through common language instead of following a discussion of how it can effectively be used as a category in our discipline leads to anachronisms and imprecision in dealing with certain terms (another topic also addressed by Montero: Montero, Alicia Inés. "Identidad e identidades...": 121-122).

3. This research therefore stays away from the search of evidence of feelings of gregariousness that emerge from (or are instilled in) the population, or, alternatively, of signs of identity of specific groups. I am aware that the latter line of inquiry is intertwined with the investigation of the image that the



specific moments and through certain processes. The specific moment analysed is the institutional dialogue established between the *concelhos* (“municipalities”) and the crown,⁴ mainly in the context of *Cortes* (“parliamentary assemblies”), but also when ambassadors and letters were sent to the *Corte*; the processes analysed are the production of written documents making claims or submitting complaints to the king on behalf of the community.

In this article a situational analysis of the construction and dissemination of the identity of a city or town through discourses bounded by the interlocutor, the circumstances in which they are produced, and the particular goals pursued in a specific moment, is therefore proposed. Ultimately, we are dealing with the image of a community designed as a mechanism to interfere in the relationship between a community and the crown. The major hindrance posed by the analysis of these sources rests, as we shall see, in the difficulty in extracting, among the several discursive elements used, those that may convey an identity substance of the community.⁵

Defining the other element of the equation —small cities in 14th century Portugal— is even trickier. Indeed, once the categories unambiguously used in the coeval documents are transposed —cities and *vilas notáveis* (“notable towns”)— which criterion is used to make a distinction between the remaining towns (the ones that were not granted the notoriety epithet) and notable towns? In other words, what sets apart small nuclei that meet what we could call the minimum requirements of urbanity from those that do not?

This question has not been dealt with by the authors of the urban monographs⁶ published in the prolific 1980s and 1990s,⁷ and the concept of ‘Portuguese medieval

community conveys of itself, as often it will not be possible to differentiate between the identity of leading groups and the identity of the urban nuclei formalized by those groups. A systematic overview of the diverse elements that help create an identity extendable to society was proposed by: Val, Isabel del. “La identidad urbana al final de Edad Media”. *Anales de Historia Medieval de la Europa Atlántica*, 1 (2006): 5-28.

4. Often there was a triangular relationship between territorial communities, the king and individuals, groups, or privileged entities.

5. A more detailed explanation of the concept of urban identity used in this article can be found in: Costa, Adelaide Millán da. “En busca de la identidad de las villas medievales portuguesas. El ejemplo de Coruche”, *La ciudad ante su identidad. La Península Ibérica en los siglos XIII al XV*, José Antonio Jara, coord. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2013: 25-58.

6. Except for the summary concerning the nature of the urban phenomenon proposed by: Conde, Manuel Sílvio Alves. *Uma Paisagem Humanizada. O Médio Tejo nos Finais da Idade Média*. Cascais: Patrimónia, 2000: II, 349-352.

7. For the most recent overview of urban medieval historiography in Portugal, see: Andrade, Amélia Aguiar; Costa, Adelaide Millán da. “Medieval Portuguese towns: the difficult affirmation of a historiographical topic”. *The historiography of medieval Portugal c. 1950-2010*, José Mattoso, Maria Lurdes Rosa, Bernardo Vasconcelos Sousa, Maria João Branco, eds. Lisbon: Instituto de Estudos Medievais, 2011: 283-301. To gauge the similarities of the historiographical evolution identified in Spain and Portugal, see: López Pérez, Miguel Ángel. “La ciudad en la historiografía bajomedieval y altomoderna hispana en los últimos treinta años: Líneas para el estudio de la cultura e identidad urbana”. *Miscelánea Medieval Murciana*, 31 (2007): 111-122; as well as the references included in this work; for the case of Castela, see: Asenjo, María. “Las ciudades medievales castellanas. Balance y perspectivas de su desarrollo historiográfico”. *En*



urban world⁸ has been used with a great deal of elasticity. Conversely, the relative importance of cities, or the hierarchical ordering of central localities—to borrow the terminology used by geographers and accepted by historians—, has been widely addressed. In general, the criteria used to classify urban nuclei were based on the combination of factors such as the existence of walls and the number of parishes, churches, notaries, *besteiros do conto*⁹ or even physicians and surgeons in each community.¹⁰

The first general census organised in the kingdom, the *numeramento* of 1527, allows for a quantitative approach. It conveys a more precise idea of the flexibility and the scope of the notion of *Portuguese urban world* in the early modern period. Adopting the criteria of five hundred homes (*fogos*) put forth by Orlando Ribeiro and Magalhães Godinho¹¹ to differentiate between rural and urban areas excludes several small nuclei that were the subject of monographs in an earlier period.¹² Even by lowering the mark to the 200 *fogos* suggested by Sílvio Alves Conde to distinguish between the ‘towns of a certain importance’ and the remaining ones,¹³ a few centres would be left out of that group.¹⁴ This aspect of a territorial community must of course be judged against the elements usually present in a definition of

la España Medieval, 28 (2005): 415-453; and for the crown of Aragon see: Falcón, María Isabel. “Historia de las ciudades y villas del reino de Aragón en la Edad Media. Evolución y desarrollo de los estudios en los últimos veinticinco años”. *En la España Medieval*, 23 (2000): 395-439.

8. Studies prepared along the lines of the Oliveira Marques Plan explained in: Marques, Antonio Henrique de Oliveira. *Novos Ensaios de História Medieval Portuguesa*. Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1988: 13-42, 43-67 (“Introdução à história da cidade medieval portuguesa”, “As cidades medievais portuguesas (Algumas bases metodológicas gerais)”). The list of these works is widely known and mentioned in several states of the art prepared periodically. See: Andrade, Amélia Aguiar; Costa, Adelaide Millán da. “Medieval Portuguese towns...”: 283-301.

9. *Besteiros do conto* were military contingents supplied by the *concelhos* to the King (see: Monteiro, João Gouveia. *A Guerra em Portugal nos finais da Idade Média*. Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1988: 58-74).

10. See: Marques, Antonio Henrique de Oliveira. *Portugal na crise dos séculos XIV e XV*, Nova História de Portugal, Joel Serrão, António Henrique de Oliveira Marques, eds. Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1987: IV, 15 and following and 181 and following. The authors of the previously mentioned monographs generally resort to all these indicators. Conde added the examination letters of physicians and surgeons (Alves Conde, Manuel Sílvio Alves. *Uma Paisagem Humanizada*. Lisbon: Cascais, 2000: I, 112-118).

11. António Henrique de Oliveira Marques and João José Alves Dias take this value for granted by choosing the 500 *fogos* criterion to describe the density of urban nuclei present in the north and south of the kingdom. See: Marques, Antonio Henrique de Oliveira; Dias, João José Alves. “A população portuguesa nos séculos XV e XVI”. *Biblos*, 70 (1994): 171-196.

12. Including only the urban centres with more than 200 *fogos*, Barcelos, Ponte de Lima, Chaves, Torres Novas, Alenquer, Torres Vedras, Guarda, Arraiolos and Silves would be excluded (see: Galego, Júlia; Daveau, Suzanne. *O numeramento de 1527-1532. Tratamento cartográfico*. Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Geográficos, 1986: 107-109). Considering the profound population variation that occurred since the mid-14th century, we do not assume a direct relationship of proportionality between the data included in the *numeramento* and the data which, in earlier periods, existed about each of these nuclei.

13. Conde, Manuel Sílvio Alves. *Uma Paisagem Humanizada...*: II, 453.

14. Such as Sintra, Cascais, Óbidos and Porto de Mós (see: Galego, Júlia; Daveau, Suzanne. *O numeramento de 1527-1532...*: 107-109).



urban world —the centrality and geostrategic, economic, political, military, and ecclesiastic power, as well as fundamental legal requirements.¹⁵

If we extend the bibliographic review of small towns to European historiography, it is concluded that the issue has been addressed since the eighties, driven by Jean Pierre Poussou and Peter Clark's intention to develop a Franco-British research project. It was precisely the difficulty experienced by these authors to define small town that triggered a wide debate on this issue, resulting in the holding of seminars and publication of conference proceedings.¹⁶ However, this scientific investment did not allow historians to agree. It shall be recalled that in 1995 Bernard Lepetit stated that, at least in the case of France, problems to circumscribe small towns were so great before the seventeenth century, that the effort might be inglorious.¹⁷ That is to say, the explanation of this category requires empirical studies (such as Lepetit wrote) and further analysis that gradually, have been carried out.¹⁸

For now, let us base on the following. It will be difficult to stabilise the concept of 'small cities', since it could be defined in terms of archetypes of cities or towns which can be different according to the level taken into consideration, such as a region or the kingdom (not to mention the European scale). Given these circumstances, in the present article the notion of 'small city' will be taken to mean exclusively the

15. I am obviously referring to the fundamental condition that standardizes urban centres (a necessary but insufficient condition), that is, the fact that every community is endowed with jurisdictional autonomy. José Luis Monsalvo argues that resorting to the concept of *sistema concelhio* ("municipality system") helps compensate for the undefined notions of town, *concelho*, city, urban municipality, and rural municipality (Monsalvo, José Luis. "Los territorios de las villas reales de la vieja Castilla, ss. XI-XIV: antecedentes, génesis y evolución. Estudio a partir de una docena de sistemas concejiles entre Arlanza y el Alto Ebro". *Studia, historica, Historia Medieval*, 17 (1999): 15-86). The definition of *concelho* (not that of *sistema concelhio* with the features that Monsalvo grants it) is, however, insufficient when there is a need to understand the 'nature of the urban' and not simply look at it from the point of view of the organization of power. See also: Val, Isabel del. "La identidad urbana...": 7.

16. Poussou, Jean-Pierre; Loupès, Philippe, eds. *Les Petites villes du Moyen-Âge à nos jours: colloque international du Centre d'Études des Espaces Urbains* (Bordeaux, 25-26 octobre 1985). Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 1987; Poussou, Jean-Pierre, dir. "Dossier Petites villes". *Revue du Nord*, 70/279 (1988): 667-787; Clark, Peter, ed. *Small Towns in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge (UK)-London: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

17. Lepetit, Bernard. "In search of the small town in early nineteenth-century France", *Small Towns in Early Modern Europe*, Peter Clark, ed. Cambridge (UK)-London: Cambridge University Press, 1995: 173.

18. See: Fray, Jean-Luc. *Villes et bourgs de Lorraine. Réseaux Urbains et centralité au Moyen Âge*. Clermont-Ferrand: Presses universitaires Blaise Pascal, 2006; Gloriès, Cécile. "Une 'grille d'urbanité': proposition pour l'analyse systématique des critères urbains, l'exemple du réseau de villes de Quercy à travers des convocations des communautés d'habitants aux assemblées d'ordres (1261-1673)", *Les petites villes du Sud-Ouest de l'Antiquité à nos jours. Actes du colloque d'Aiguillon* (Aiguillon, 12 et 13 mai 2000), Jean-Pierre Poussou, dir. Mamers: Société d'Histoire des Petites Villes, 2004: 97-119; Costa, Adelaide Millán da. "Quand les médiévistes arrivent aux petites villes", *Petites villes européennes au bas Moyen Âge: entre l'histoire urbaine et l'histoire local*, Adelaide Millán da Costa, ed. Lisbon: Instituto de Estudos Medievais, 2013: 145-148 (for more information: Costa, Adelaide Millán da. "Petites villes européennes au bas Moyen Âge: entre l'histoire urbaine et l'histoire local". *Instituto de Estudos Medievais*. 27 June 2014 <<http://iem.fcsh.unl.pt/ebooks/estudos11>>).



status the territorial community enjoys in the political system.¹⁹ The classification criteria will be established further below. We are aware that there is not, necessarily, a link between a community's political relevance and other economic, demographic or geostrategic criteria that traditionally underpin hierarchy of cities and towns.

2. The contexts and the texts conveying an urban identity

Over 25 years ago, Armindo de Sousa published a seminal study about the political representation of urban nuclei in Portuguese Parliament.²⁰ He proposed the definition of Parliament as a substructure of the Portuguese medieval political system, and identified its rules of procedure, the functions it performed, and, in general, the connection parliamentary assemblies established with local power authorities.

In terms of the cities and towns represented, the composition of the parliamentary assemblies was not static during the medieval period. The kingdom's geographical representation in 1481 is thoroughly known, and it was kept rather stable until the 1530s.²¹ Representatives of eighty cities and towns, hierarchically distributed across the physical space of the assembly, took part in the opening session. An uncertain number of other towns would be summoned to attend the session (or would show up at the assembly's venue). Armindo de Sousa concluded that, between 1385 and 1490, 120 territorial communities participated in parliament.²²

The political hierarchy among urban centres with parliamentary representation had obvious repercussions in the discourse that was produced on behalf of all the

19. A systematic ordering of the elements that make a political interpretation of the medieval urban world possible can be examined in: Costa, Adelaide Millán da. *Projeção espacial de domínios. Das relações de poder ao burgo portuense*. Lisbon: Universidade Aberta (PhD Dissertation), 1999: 155 and following; Costa, Adelaide Millán da. "Projeção espacial de domínios. Das relações de poder ao burgo portuense". Universidade Aberta. 27 June 2014 <<https://repositorioaberto.uab.pt/bitstream/10400.2/2426/4/Tese%20de%20doutoramento%20-%20Adelaide%20Costa%20%281999%29.pdf>>; Costa, Adelaide Millán da. "Elites and oligarchies in the late medieval Portuguese urban world". *Imago Temporis. Medium Aevum*, 2 (2009): 69-70.

20. Sousa, Armindo de. *As Cortes Medievais Medievais Portuguesas (1385-1490)*. Porto: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica-Centro de História da Universidade do Porto, 1990: I. Apart from this work, based on his PhD dissertation, Sousa authored several key works about the medieval Parliament. Luís Miguel Duarte recently made a positive review about this question in: Duarte, Luís Miguel. "The Portuguese Parliament: are we asking the right questions?". *e-JPH*, 1/2 (2003); Duarte, Luís Miguel. "The Portuguese Parliament: are we asking the right questions?". *Brown University*. 27 June 2014 <http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Portuguese_Brazilian_Studies/ejph/html/issue2/pdf/duarte.pdf>.

21. For more on the representation of cities and towns with a seat in the opening sessions of the *Cortes* over time, see: Costa, Adelaide Millán da. "O impacto urbano no discurso jurídico da baixa Idade Média em Portugal. Uma abordagem possível". *Edad Media. Revista de Historia*, 15 (2014): 59-78; Costa, Adelaide Millán da. "State-building in Portugal during the Middle Ages: a royal endeavour in partnership with the local powers?", *Empowering Interactions: Political Cultures and the Emergence of the State in Europe, 1300-1900*, Wim Blockmans, André Holenstein, Jon Mathieu, eds. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009: 227-230.

22. Sousa, Armindo de. *As Cortes Medievais Medievais...*: I, 201.



communities, that is the discourse contained in the *capítulos gerais*. These texts were created during the assembly proceedings, and according to Armindo de Sousa they can be divided into three parts: (i) the facts that support the request or complaint, (ii) the request, and (iii) the arguments put forth to persuade the king. The *capítulos gerais* were in theory the result of the evaluation of the complaints submitted by the *procuradores* (“representatives”) of all the communities. Ultimately, though, the king was only informed of the goals and problems faced by the major cities and towns, but drawn up as if they were shared by the whole population. In sum, the political representation of the various urban communities in parliament was, understandably, very unequal.

The *capítulos gerais* studied by Armindo de Sousa were, however, only one of the different types of documents produced in the context of the *Cortes*. Another example is the *capítulos especiais*, complaints submitted on behalf of each specific territorial community, rather than the whole people. It is important to emphasize that these texts were produced and voted in local assemblies held in the cities or towns before the emissaries were sent to the *Cortes*. Furthermore, unlike the *capítulos gerais*, the *capítulos especiais* were not drafted by legal experts in the atmosphere of the *Cortes*.

The aim of the most recent research on the *capítulos especiais* is not to understand the substance of such requests —the facts that support the request—, but instead the arguments which supported them,²³ thus capturing the political culture²⁴ that

23. The argumentative dimension of justifications for *capítulos especiais das Cortes* has been advocated by: Coelho, Maria Helena da Cruz. “Riba Cõa em Cortes (séc. XV)”, *O Tratado de Alcanices e a Importância Histórica das Terras de Riba Cõa. Actas do Congresso Histórico Luso-Espanhol (12-17 de setembro de 1997)*. Lisbon: Universidade Católica Editora, 1998: 235; Coelho, Maria Helena da Cruz. “O poder concelhio em tempos medievais: o «deve» e «haver» historiográfico”. *Revista da Faculdade de Letras. História*, 31/7 (2006): 26; Coelho, Maria Helena da Cruz. “O discurso de Guimarães em Cortes”, *Actas do 2º Congresso Histórico de Guimarães. Guimarães: Camara Municipal de Guimarães*, 1997: VI, 29, 31-32; Coelho, Maria Helena da Cruz. “A Guarda em Cortes nos séculos XIV e XV”. *Revista Portuguesa de História*, 35 (2001-2002): 126-127; Martins, Rui Cunha. *A fronteira antes da sua metáfora. Cinco teses sobre a fronteira hispano-portuguesa no século XV*. Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra (PhD Dissertation), 2000: I, 149-235.

24. By political culture I mean the set of beliefs about the foundations of power and about the rules that organize it that are accepted by several structures that perform in the political system. This category may include factors such as the legal order and the legal culture and also, for the 15th century, sets of coherent values more or less formalised. These factors do not need to be accepted by every political actor, but should be part of a horizon of acceptability. That is, in a same system different appropriations of political culture exist. For a more in-depth analysis about the concept of political culture used in this article see: Costa, Adelaide Millán da. “A cultura política em ação. Diálogos institucionais entre a Coroa e os centros urbanos em Portugal no século XIV”. *En la España Medieval*, 36 (2013): 9-29. Analyzing the texts that reflect the relationship between the *concelhos* and the crown is not the only option when trying to capture political culture. There are other ways, such as the archival procedure of the documents put in place by the municipalities. On the ideological scope of the creation of such document repositories by urban communities, see the works of Ana Filipa Pinto Roldão, especially her PhD Dissertation: Roldão, Ana Filipa Pinto. *A memória da cidade. Administração urbana e práticas de escrita em Évora (1415-1536)*. Lisbon: Universidade de Lisboa (PhD Dissertation), 2011. Roldão, Ana Filipa Pinto. “A memória da cidade. Administração urbana e práticas de escrita em Évora (1415-1536)”. Universidade de Lisboa. 15 September 2015 <http://repositorio.ul.pt/bitstream/10451/4858/1/ulsd061714_td_Ana_Roldao.pdf>. An example of the use of this method to perceive the urban identity of a small community can be found in Costa, Adelaide Millán da. “En busca de la identidad...”: 25-58.



sustained the agents of local power. Can the hypothetical urban identity of the cities and towns that filed *capítulos especiais* also be captured?

3. Toward a political definition of ‘small cities’

The goal of this section is to establish the classification criteria for cities and towns in order to identify the categories that allow us to evaluate the importance that a community holds in the political system. An attempt at providing a systematic arrangement of the multiple criteria that have been used in historiography to form a typology of territorial communities as a subsystem of the medieval political system yields the following table.

Table I. Political classification criteria of territorial communities

Legal status	Formal acknowledgment of autonomy
	Privileges granted by the crown or the landlords
	Jurisdictional definition (crown land or seigniorial land)
	Dependence upon other communities (of an administrative or judicial nature)
	Local government status (organization, complexity and autonomy)
Political profile	Representation in parliamentary assemblies (<i>Cortes</i>)
	Political mobilization skills of other communities
	Political ambition, as expressed in the community’s ideological

Such categories are the result of an intellectualization, of a logical and coherent ordering of the information transmitted by the documents. A research organised according to this logic will allow us to outline the possible model pointed at in the question in the title of this article (or to conclude that there such a model does not exist).

For now, let us look closer at the information conveyed by contemporaries through an analysis of the discourses they produced, namely (i) the ordering of cities and towns made by the crown, (ii) how territorial communities themselves established comparisons, and (iii) the representation of the community that local political bodies convey to the outside world.



The hierarchy of cities and towns produced by the crown can be perceived through several elements. Given that the king has the power to summon the *concelhos*²⁵ to the *Cortes* by sending them a letter asking for their presence, the record of political participation of “the people”²⁶ is thus determined by the king. Even though every community, as well as every individual, has the right to appeal to the king, many of them were barred from engaging in formal dialogue with the crown.

Apart from this fundamental regal right to establish a primary hierarchy of importance among territorial communities, the very setting of the scenic space where the opening sessions of parliament were held created a hierarchy. The representatives of fifteen nuclei identified as cities and *notable towns* indeed had a seat in the three front long benches, of a total of sixteen reserved for the delegates of the *concelhos* during the sessions. In fact, this symbolic hierarchy resulted from negotiations between the *concelhos* and the crown, and it changed over time, thus reflecting the evolving status of several towns.²⁷

Other than the way the space was organised in the opening session of the *Cortes*, there is another revealing source: legal texts. It is precisely in the *Ordenações Afonsinas*,²⁸ a mid-15th century compilation of laws, that a distinction between cities,²⁹ notable towns³⁰ and other towns is established. In the *Ordenações Manuelinas*,³¹ dated from the first quarter of the 16th century, this categorisation had adapted to the new reality.³²

These legal texts allowed for a less clear-cut yet important analysis. An attempt was made at identifying the discursive circumstances in which specific urban nuclei are mentioned in these compilations of the late Middle Ages³³ and whether

25. In legal discourse, the notions of ‘cities’ and ‘towns’ mostly mean *concelhos*, territorial communities with an autonomous political existence, not ‘urban units’.

26. An expression popularized by Armindo de Sousa in his different works about this subject.

27. An analysis over the *longue durée* allowed us to conclude that the hierarchical ordering of the prestige of the *concelhos* crystallised in the seats in the *Cortes* follows the same course of the change in status recognised to urban centres, even if with a measure of delay, surely caused by tradition and acquired rights.

28. *Ordenações Afonsinas*, ed. Mário Júlio Brito de Almeida, Eduardo Borges Nunes. Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1984, 5 vols. (reproduction of the 1792 edition).

29. The nine episcopal seats: Braga, Porto, Coimbra, Lisbon, Évora, Silves, Guarda, Viseu, and Lamego.

30. Beja, Elvas, Guimarães, Leiria, Santarém, and Tavira. *Ordenações Afonsinas...*: II, 19 (liber 2, tit. 2, par. 5).

31. *Ordenações Manuelinas*, ed. João José Alves Dias. and intr. Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Históricos da Universidade Nova de Lisbon, 2002: I (reproduction of edition of Valentim Fernandes —Lisbon, 1512-1513—); *Ordenações Manuelinas*, ed. Mário Júlio Brito de Almeida. Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1984: I (reproduction of edition of Real Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, in 1798).

32. See: Dias, João José Alves. *Gentes e Espaços (em torno da população portuguesa na primeira metade do século XVI)*. Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian-Junta Nacional de investigação Científica e Tecnológica, 1996: I, 183-193; Costa, Adelaide Millán da. “O impacto urbano...”: 59-78.

33. The analysis from which these findings were drawn was carried out in the already mentioned compilations, as well as *Livro das leis e Posturas*, ed. Nuno Espinosa Gomes da Silva, Maria Teresa Campos Rodrigues. Lisbon: Faculdade de Direito, 1971; *Ordenações del Rei Dom Duarte*, ed. Martim de Albuquerque, Eduardo Borges Nunes. Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1984. See: Costa, Adelaide Millán da.



those references help to gauge in a comparative fashion the status given to those communities in the context of the Portuguese political system.

The reference to certain cities and towns in the several laws included in the compilations reflects the scope of the values, norms and behaviours in which the legislator or the editor of a compilation are involved, opening the door for the dense knowledge of political culture. This investigation corroborated the conclusions already drawn on the importance of the cities and notable towns by examining the role they play in legal discourse.

Let us now turn to the evidence on the hierarchy of the territorial communities perceivable through the image that a few *concelhos* convey about other *concelhos*. This line of inquiry, unlike the previous ones, has not yet been pursued; therefore it will only be possible to present sporadic elements that result from the familiarity with sources. In other words, the conclusions reached need to be backed by a deeper empirical analysis. In the documents produced by cities and towns for the outside world, especially in the petitions addressed to the king, a comparison with other urban centres conveying a categorisation can be identified. For instance, by arguing for the extension to its community of a certain privilege held by another community, a major urban centre like Porto chooses Lisbon as a reference point.³⁴ On the other hand, a town of reduced political, economic and geostrategic proportions compares itself with similar communities. It is clear that these analogies are not strictly made in terms of comparable political status —other elements are taken into consideration, such as geographical proximity. Even though this research approach has not been explored, it may convey a perspective on how *concelhos* saw themselves and others.

Lastly, let us consider the element that we are most concerned with —the hypothetical identity discourse of cities and towns, in other words the image that the local political bodies disseminate to the outside world about the community. The research carried out until now allows us to conclude that in the 15th century a few politically powerful urban nuclei created true ideological constructions. Even if detailed narratives about the history of those communities are lacking, coherent self-representations exist. Furthermore, the very dialogue between those municipalities and the crown, mainly reflected in the *capítulos especiais* presented in the *Cortes*, makes this self-representation evolve.

“O impacto do discurso jurídico da Baixa Idade Média em Portugal”. *Edad Media. Revista de Historia*, 13 (2014): 59-78.

34. Costa, Adelaide Millán da. *Projeção espacial de domínios...*: 124-130; Costa, Adelaide Millán da. “O discurso político dos homens do concelho português na época medieval”, *Discursos de Legitimação. Actes du Colloque International (Lisboa, 26-29 de setembro de 2002)*, Danielle Buschinger, Maria João Ranco, Rosa Maria Sequeira, eds. Lisbon: Universidade Aberta, 2003. Online version: Costa, Adelaide Millán da. “O discurso político dos homens do concelho português na época medieval”. *Universidade Aberta*. 15 September 2015 <<https://repositorioaberto.uab.pt/bitstream/10400.2/1554/1/ComACosta.htm>>.



While the texts regarding Lisbon, the *caput regni*, have not yet been investigated, Porto³⁵ and Elvas³⁶ ideological discourses have already been thoroughly addressed. The superior level of production of the identity of an urban centre is an ideological discourse. In such cases, elites (showing a great deal of maturity), build a perfect discourse to legitimate the urban centre's participation in the political system, imparting unique features on its community.

Thus far we have presented the basic circumstances, or rather an overview of the criteria, both the historiographical criteria and the ones suggested by actors in the Middle Ages, that allow us to identify the importance a community holds in the political system. Let us now take into consideration the two key topics of this article: political identity and 'small cities'. In order to be recognised as part of the political system, a given local community had to be autonomous, in other words it had to have received a *foral*, to have a legal, judicial and administrative structure. This does not mean that the community was required to have urban features in social, economic, cultural, or morphological terms.

In the term 'small cities', the adjective 'small' means politically not very relevant, according to the existing political culture. And that relevance will be gauged by the criteria spelled out above. In general, small cities are those whose representatives occupy the back seats in the opening session of the *Cortes*, or that simply are not summoned by the monarch to attend parliamentary assemblies.³⁷

Let us then rephrase the question that guides us in this article: to what extent do small cities build an explicit political identity discourse? In other words, to what extent are the arguments included in the petitions (*capítulos especiais*) presented by the cities and notable towns in the *Cortes* (or in other instances of dialogue with the King) similar to those used by the remaining towns, or do they convey a qualitative difference?

4. Between the political culture and the urban identity of Portuguese 'small cities' in the late Middle Ages

The subtitle of this paper makes clear that this is a preliminary theoretical approach. Its preliminary nature is a consequence of the fact that the question it

35. Costa, Adelaide Millán da. *Projeção espacial de domínios...*; Costa, Adelaide Millán da. "O discurso político dos homens..."

36. Costa, Adelaide Millán da. "O discurso político dos concelhos portugueses na Baixa Idade Média: convergências e especificidades, o caso de Elvas", *Des(a)fiando discursos. Homenagem a Maria Emília Ricardo Marques*, Dulce Cravalho, Dionísio Vila Maior, Rui De Azevedo Teixeira, eds. Lisbon: Universidade Aberta, 2005: 265-272.

37. *Capítulos de Cortes* corresponds to discourses made by elite members of the community in order to influence the decisions of monarchs. In these circumstances, as already emphasised at the beginning of this text, the biggest problem they pose to historiographical analysis is to distinguish recurrent discursive topics of particular topics, in each city or town. On the subject see: Sousa, Armindo de. "O discurso político dos concelhos nas Cortes de 1385". *Revista da Faculdade de Letras. História*, 2/2 (1985): 9-44.



addresses does not yet constitute an established line of enquiry. In this section, an attempt will be made to draw relevant elements for the present study from conclusions reached in relevant works.

Let us go back to the initial question: is there a model of political identity in the 'small cities' of Portugal in the late Middle Ages? Firstly, the chronology needs to be addressed by refining the excessively wide concept of late Middle Ages. A comparison of the information on the mid-14th century and that on the 15th century reveals differences in the discourse used by the *concelhos* in the context of their relations with the crown. Bearing in mind the goal of studying the arguments used in the *capítulos especiais*, about 300 of these, presented in the parliamentary assemblies held in the mid-14th century, were analysed.³⁸ The symbolic political status of the *concelhos* that filed the complaints was uneven. Presumably,³⁹ their representatives would indeed take a seat between the 1st and the 6th bench of the opening sessions of the *Cortes*. However, given that, as mentioned above, there were 16 long benches, all these communities ended up having a seat in the front row. Thus it is not possible to draw any direct conclusion about the 'small cities'.

By including in a typology the arguments put forth by the *povos* ("people"), we can conclude that between 1331 and 1361 the rhetoric of the texts produced by local elites from diverse communities is not significantly differently, even if divergent discursive trends can be identified.⁴⁰ The first type of argument put forth, the defence of moral and political values, is seldom used. As for the defence of the order of things, in other words refusing change in administrative, economic or social practices, it is a recurrent argument and all the *concelhos* resort to it. The third category of arguments that support petitions is the defence of the legal order. In most cases it rests on custom, *foros* and regal privileges granted to different cities and towns.

For the same time frame, documents concerning small nuclei without parliamentary representation that resorted to similar arguments based on the legal order⁴¹ and emphasizing in particular local laws, exist. The conscience of having a legal personality, translated in the defence of its autonomy, could be the first level of perception of territorial communities' political identity.

According to the known data for the mid-14th century, we could argue that rather than the narrative of cities and towns claiming their own identity, there is a basis

38. Costa, Adelaide Millán da. "A cultura política...": 9-29.

39. The possibility that the symbolic ordering of the *concelhos* reflected in the distribution of seats in the opening session already existed in the mid-14th century cannot be safely stated.

40. Even though the universe of analysis is small, it is safe to say that the more general arguments that mention reason and the law —the defense of moral and political values— are used by major *concelhos*.

41. See, for instance: Marques, José. "O concelho alentejano de Figueira e a Ordem de Avis". *Revista da Faculdade de Letras. História*, 5 (1988): 95-112; Saraiva, Maria Teresa Monteverde Plantier. *Figueira. Comenda da Ordem de Avis (Publicação de Fontes)*. Lisbon: Edições Colibri, 1997; Marques, José. "A ordem de Santiago e o concelho de Setúbal em 1341", *As Ordens Militares em Portugal e no Sul da Europa*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, Paulo Pacheco, eds. Lisbon: Colibri, 1997: 285-305. These references are mere examples, as there are many studies on *agravamentos* ("appeals") filed with the king by the *concelhos* that yield the same findings.



of a shared political culture to guide the performance of territorial communities in their dealings with the crown.

Let us now address the 15th century. As we have seen, communities with a strong political weight, such as Porto and Elvas, built an image of themselves as unique entities and projected that conception on to discourses that were part of institutional dialogue, as a way of obtaining returns. The analysis of *capítulos especiais* presented to the *Cortes* (or preserved) by smaller towns does not confirm the existence of a similar representation by the respective local governments.⁴²

A first question must be asked. Could the discursive coherence identified in a few important urban nuclei be due to a more effective preservation of documents? In other words, are the conclusions drawn about the construction of an image for the outside world from politically relevant *concelhos* based only on the amount of evidence available? Or, conversely, is there a real qualitative line separating communities that remain attached to the defence of the local order, seemingly crystallised in time, from others with enough 'political ambition' to create an autonomous image of themselves?

Continuing with this argument, the greater the ability of local leaders to create a unique and specific identity in discursive terms, the more elaborate the identity of an urban nucleus would be. It could also be argued that this change in self-representation of some cities and towns, perceivable in the 15th century,⁴³ may be related to the crystallisation of elites in municipal government and their resulting professionalization, duly assisted by legal experts. The creation of these structured local identities is therefore linkable to how the members of the ruling elites appropriate the status of communities.

For now, it is safe to argue that there is a political culture shared by the several structures that participate in the political system. Reaching a higher level of inquiry—the specific identity of a city or town— would require extracting from the discourses the shared arguments that support them and identifying the elements that are specific to each nucleon. And it will be mainly on the basis of this analysis of the discourses of 'the people' that a political classification of territorial communities will be outlined.

In an upcoming study, I intend to propose not a preliminary theoretical approach, but an explanatory theory, translated in a possible model on the political identity of 'small cities' in Portugal in the late Middle Ages. This goal will only be reachable after several monographic studies are conducted.

42. Among many possible examples, I chose the case of Coruche. See: Sousa, Armindo de. *As Cortes Medievais Medievais...*: I, 192; Armindo de. *As Cortes Medievais Medievais...*: II, 44; Museu Municipal de Coruche. Tombo da Vila de Coruche. Tombo da vila de 1687, f. 2-12. The *capítulos especiais* presented in the parliamentary assemblies or outside them were analysed by several authors but under a perspective that does not emphasize the unpacking of the arguments used. See the systematic list of works in: Costa, Adelaide Millán da. "A cultura política...": 16-17.

43. In the city of Porto this change was perceivable from the late 15th century.



*SABEN MOLTES COSES CONTRA MOLTS CONVESSOS
DE XATIVA E DE VALÈNCIA.*

CONVERTED JEWS IN THE KINGDOM
OF VALENCIA: DENUNCIATION AND SOCIAL
BETRAYAL IN LATE 15TH CENTURY XÀTIVA

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ABSTRACT

The article analyses the mechanisms of denunciation used in the early years of operation of the Royal Inquisition court of Valencia in the late 15th century. Our study of the testimony given by a group of old Christians who denounced various Jewish converts in the city of Xàtiva has enabled us to reconstruct how denunciation took place, and the development of the climate of social betrayal which was encouraged by the inquisitorial authorities. We have identified the informants —old Christians— and those denounced —Jewish converts— and their respective socio-professional occupations. The informants were extremely intolerant of their Jewish converso neighbours, whose attitudes they monitored. They used the new horizontal mechanisms for social control, implemented, disseminated and encouraged by the inquisitorial authorities, which encouraged old Christians to observe, monitor and report dissident behaviour and practices among Jewish converts in Valencia.¹

KEYWORDS

Inquisition, Denunciation, Conversos, Xàtiva, Fifteenth century.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Inquisitio, Delatio, Conversi, Saetabis, XV saeculum.

1. The Breakdown in Social Cohesion Viewed from Below. A Practical Exercise in Microhistory

In this paper we shall delve into the world of converted Jews from the perspective both of the victim —the converted Jew on trial— and the accuser, including under this heading the informer who brings about the incarceration and subsequent prosecution of the converted Jew. It is known and documented that converted Jews denounced other converts —even members of their own family— during their trials, but what future research must seek to clarify is at what point during the trial these denunciations were made, as we suspect that many involved people who had already been tried or who were dead. The documentation should be used to show whether converts did indeed denounce other converts who had yet to be denounced or tried. In principle, we are inclined to believe that such denunciations were infrequent and that, while these informers have been proven to exist,² they were neither abundant nor predominant. Instead, we believe that, as has been proven, the Spanish Inquisitors' list of those suspected of practising Judaism was elaborated partly from the self-confessions made by converts during the promulgation of the edicts of grace and partly from the accusations made by neighbours, co-workers or friends who were long-standing Christians and who could sometimes be driven to make their denunciations in bad faith, as would happen with maids, who were often the source of false accusations. This paper aims to study denunciations of this type using the documentation emanated from the Inquisition. We have focused our attention on a little-known character within the history of the Inquisition —the informer— and on the setting for the denunciation and social betrayal.³

Our objective, therefore, is to change the perspective from which converted Jews are analysed and to open the issue up to a new vision. For example, when converted Jews are studied as victims of the Inquisition, and recalling the widely accepted proposal by Bennassar, who warned of the social control exercised by the Inquisition, of the 'pedagogy of fear',⁴ observation is extended to the controllers as, in the words of Moreno,

pero si entonces se hablaba del control social vertical, desde la institución proyectada sobre la sociedad, ahora hablamos de control social horizontal, de una suerte de "pedagogía del entorno social" que se expresa a través de la delación, en conexión con una visión del poder

1. This article has been written within the framework of the following research projects: *Fundamentos de identidad política: La construcción de identidades políticas urbanas en la Península Ibérica en el tránsito a la modernidad* (HAR2009-08946) and *Inquisición y sociedades urbanas. Los Tribunales de Valencia, Teruel y Cuenca entre los siglos XV-XVI* (HAR2012-34444), both funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation of the Government of Spain. Used abbreviation: AUV, Archivo Histórico de la Universidad de Valencia.

2. The role played by informers among converted Jews has been analysed in: Caro, Julio. *Los Judíos en la España Moderna y Contemporánea*. Madrid: Itsmo, 1986: I, 295-302.

3. We apply this concept as most denouncers had close contact with the denounced, be they neighbours, co-workers, apprentices or maids of the denounced.

4. Bennassar, Bartolomé. "Modelos de mentalidad inquisitorial: métodos de su 'pedagogía del miedo'", *Inquisición española y mentalidad inquisitorial*, Ángel Alcalá, ed. Barcelona: Ariel, 1984: 174-182.



*hecho migajas que para gobernar una sociedad ingobernable necesita del consenso. En este contexto adquiere nuevo relieve la delación como fermento del cainismo social, de ruptura social y de quiebra de la sociabilidad preexistente.*⁵

In this context, denunciation acquires a new form as the seed for social betrayal, social breakdown and the disintegration of existing sociability.

The inquisitorial mindset would prove a temptation for the individual, a temptation encouraged by the presence of an institutional and religious arm whose use was fully sanctioned by the powers that be. The Inquisition was therefore not only an instrument of ecclesiastical or royal power but also an instrument of power for individuals, enabling them to coerce and exclude their neighbours, and it became a kind of *guardiana de la sociabilidad*.⁶ Maria Tausiet's thesis, published in 2000,⁷ abounds in this perspective as, in short, it deals with the new Inquisitorial Right⁸ (a law which enjoyed the backing of all the powers at the confluence of socio-political interests) which was used to exclude the *otro en beneficio propio*⁹ and which would make effective use of newly introduced procedures, such as *la denuncia como medio normal de indagación y en servirse, por una simple sospecha, del arresto, y en practicar el interrogatorio y la tortura*.¹⁰

Social conflicts, through studies such as Tausiet's study of witchcraft in Aragón, reveal the development of tensions in the domestic sphere; tensions which foster social betrayal.¹¹ These tensions, brought on by the introduction of the Inquisition and the development of a new legal process which encouraged denouncement and secret testimonies, which enabled friends, neighbours, co-workers, family members and the like to make denunciations with absolute impunity, fanned the flames of this social betrayal, a betrayal which also became rife among family circles, as noted by Escudero in a recent paper on Luis Vives, which revealed that Vives' family did not appear to be one of 'harmony and solidarity' but was instead *aparece como armónica y solidaria, sino entreverada de disensiones y denuncias de unos contra otros* and

5. "where we once spoke of vertical social control, projected from the institution onto society, we now speak of horizontal social control, of a kind of 'pedagogy of the social setting' which is expressed through denunciation, in connection with a vision of crumbling power when what is needed to govern an ungovernable society is consensus". Moreno, Doris. *La invención de la Inquisición*. Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2004: 292-293.

6. "guardian of sociability". Mereu, Italo. *Historia de la intolerancia en Europa*. Barcelona: Paidós, 2003: 22.

7. Tausiet, María. *Ponzoña en los ojos. Brujería y superstición en Aragón*. Saragossa: Institución Fernando el Católico, 2000.

8. We agree with Italo Mereu's thesis, which proposes the need to define an individual and specific Inquisitorial Right which had arisen under the protection of the new types of judicial procedures developed by the Inquisition. Mereu, Italo. *Historia de la intolerancia...*: 43.

9. "other for personal gain". Moreno, Doris. *La invención de la Inquisición...*: 292-293.

10. "denouncement as a standard means of investigation, and make use of mere suspicion as sufficient grounds for an arrest and the practice of interrogation and torture". Mereu, Italo. *Historia de la intolerancia...*: 42.

11. See: Tausiet, María. *Ponzoña en los ojos...*



which reflected the cruelty of the tribunal in its prosecution of a dead woman and its horrific ruling to disinter and burn her bones.¹²

In the testifications studied for the purposes of this paper, some of the denunciations concerned acts committed at a much earlier date and accused people who had since died. Given that the trials have not been preserved, we do not know the final result of the investigations conducted in the wake of these depositions nor how many of those denounced were dug up and their bones burned, but the Inquisition's obsession with noting and recording these denunciations of the deceased reveals, in the words of Escudero, the *sorprendente dureza de aquella Inquisición de primera hora, y su temprana obsesión por quebrantar la fama y crédito no ya de cualquier hereje o presunto hereje, sino de cualquier persona meramente sospechosa de algo*.¹³

Our analysis provides a micro-social explanation of the Inquisition's actions, in line with the proposal put forward by García Cárcel.¹⁴ The most interesting document used for this work is a fragment from a register of depositions made in the city of Xàtiva. Starting in November 1489 and ending in January 1490,¹⁵ it is of great interest to our study as it contains numerous testimonies given by the people of Xàtiva in the late 15th century. The depositions are listed in chronological order, to the tune of three or four a day, and provide a valuable source of information which is useful for reconstructing the microhistory of this corner of the Kingdom of Valencia -a corner which had, until 1492, a Jewish quarter, a community of converted Jews and a Moorish quarter. Some of the testimonies take us back in time to years before, as some individuals relate in their denunciations events that had happened 15, 20, 30 and even 50 years previously.¹⁶

I agree with Echevarría, when she states that

Cada vez más, nos encontramos ante nuevos planteamientos metodológicos, posibles gracias al descubrimiento de nuevos fondos documentales, su relectura con los conocimientos actualizados, o bien a la aplicación de modelos tomados de otras especialidades. Otro ejemplo sería la posibilidad de escribir en géneros inexplorados hasta ahora para el campo mudéjar,

12. "driven by disagreements and denunciations against one another". Escudero, José Antonio. "Luis Vives y la Inquisición". *Revista de Inquisición (intolerancia y derechos humanos)*, 13 (2009): 24.

13. "surprising severity of the fledgling Inquisition and its early obsession with destroying the name and reputation not just of any old heretic or alleged heretic but of anybody who was even suspected of anything". Escudero, José Antonio. "Luis Vives y la Inquisición...": 24.

14. García Cárcel, Ricardo. "Prólogo", María Tausiet, *Ponzoña en los ojos. Brujería y superstición en Aragón*. Saragossa: Institución Fernando el Católico, 2000: 16.

15. AUV. Varia 02-02. The proceedings appear to be incomplete, as they begin at f. 134. Nevertheless, the document is of great interest for providing a historical insight into an unknown community, that of the converted Jews of Xàtiva.

16. Within the denunciations, the testimony of Ausias Tora stretches back 20 years earlier. AUV. Varia 02-02, f. 136r. (16th November 1489). The denunciation of Asensio Miralles harks back to a period 28 or 30 years earlier. AUV. Varia 02-02, f. 143r. (21st November 1489). The deposition of wool carder Bertomeu Enguerot goes back 50 years prior to the date of his testimony. AUV. Varia 02-02, f. 162r. (6th December 1489).



*como el biográfico, que con el aporte creciente de documentación de todo tipo, y la base proporcionada por los estudios prosopográficos y de caso particulares, es al fin posible.*¹⁷

From this perspective, I propose a cross-sectional and inter-disciplinary study of otherness and segregation, viewing them from within and from below as part of a formula, the 'history of below' which originated from Edward Palmer Thompson and which seeks to exhume the lives of 'ordinary' people, in a labour which has been dubbed a veritable *hazaña de gimnasia intelectual*.¹⁸

This analysis is based upon three historical methodologies —study of the working classes, microhistory and history from below— which are highly developed within studies in Modern History and Contemporary History but which have been barely outlined within Hispanic Medievalism.

It is worth clarifying, albeit very briefly, certain issues regarding history from below. One such issue would be the danger of selecting individuals who do not share the common profile of their social group, as warned against by Sharpe,¹⁹ and another would be the rejection of attempts by specialists in Contemporary History to monopolise history from below, claiming that such an approach can only be taken from the French Revolution onwards. In defence of medievalism, it must be noted that one of the pioneering works in this vein was written by Le Roy Ladurie in 1975, in his work on Montaillou.²⁰

Amelang discussed these aspects in the 1980s, pronouncing two categorical statements, noting, on the one hand, the vast number of sources available in Spain for conducting this type of study, such as inquisitorial sources, judicial sources in the broadest sense and notarial sources, and, on the other hand, recalling that popular culture was not exclusively Christian, pointing out instead that Modern Spain was to contain popular cultures in the Jewish, converted Jewish, Islamic and Morisco vein -cultures often at odds with the official line and the elites within these separate communities.²¹

On the other hand, to analyse the individual being studied from such an elemental perspective as that of free will is to observe human beings as subject to their own history. In José María Perceval's interpretation of the Morisco community, by

17. "We are increasingly finding ourselves faced with new methodological approaches made possible thanks to the discovery of new documentary sources, to existing documents being re-read in the light of updated knowledge or to the application of models taken from other areas of specialisation. One such example would be the possibility of writing in genres hitherto unexplored within the Mudejar field, such as biography, which, with an increasing supply of documentation of all kinds and the foundation provided by prosopographical studies and individual cases, has finally become possible". Echevarría, Ana. "Los mudéjares: ¿minoría, marginados o 'grupos culturales privilegiados'?". *Medievalismo*, 18 (2008): 53.

18. "feat of intellectual gymnastics". Serna, Justo; Pons, Anacleto. *Cómo se escribe la microhistoria. Ensayo sobre Carlo Ginzburg*. Madrid: Cátedra, 2000: 33.

19. Sharpe, Jim. "Historia desde abajo", *Formas de hacer Historia*, Peter Burke, ed. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1993: 47.

20. Le Roy Ladurie, Emmanuel. *Montaillou aldea occitana de 1294 a 1324*. Madrid: Taurus, 1981.

21. Amelang, James S. "La cultura popular a l'Espanya moderna. Possibilitats d'investigació". *Manuscripts: revista d'història moderna*, 3 (1986): 13.



proposing the individuality of each historical subject in his study of the Morisco collective, he rejects the invention of alterity, of otherness, based on the expression “all are one”, which he masterfully takes apart, affirming that *se construye un todo unificado llamado “morisco”, concluyendo que “todos son uno” para luego eliminarlo mediante la expulsión*.²² In the case of the Jewish converts, what we are seeking to do is to x-ray this excluded, segregated, persecuted, observed, denounced, watched over and condemned group from the inside, from its diversity, its difference, its tension and its stratification. But we also want to know who were the informers and the engineers behind their downfall.

The creation of otherness, from the Western point of view, has not functioned as a duality. Instead, on many occasions, as shown in the case of the Moriscos, Christians have not *comprende en el fondo la dualidad misma que pretende al concebir un otro, sino que habla en el fondo de sí mismo*. Moriscos are part of Christian society, as the Moriscos do not exist if not within the discourse of the oppressors, the dominant discourse, in the words of José María Perceval, and, as such, when Moriscos *y por ello, cuando intente hablar, tendrá que hacerlo en las coordenadas del discurso impuesto si quiere ser entendido*.²³

One way of studying otherness, in the shape of segregated or persecuted collectives, is through microhistory. This branch of History is interesting for its ability to disentangle from the sources aspects that usually go unnoticed by historians in their habitual task of writing History: to glean information through unusual and hard-to-explain news, through seemingly inconsequential data or by studying anodyne characters with little or no impact on the bigger picture or on History with a capital H.

I am not suggesting that we write—or even discuss writing—the whole of History based on microhistory. Far from it. What I am suggesting is that we can use the microhistorical method, use part histories, micro-biography, to attempt to access this vision of historical societies from below and, in the words of Jim Sharpe, *los historiadores que trabajan desde abajo han mostrado cómo la utilización imaginativa del material de la fuentes puede iluminar muchas zonas de la historia que, de lo contrario, podrían haberse visto condenadas a permanecer en la oscuridad*.²⁴

This is precisely what microhistory proposes: access to fragments, to little bits of historical knowledge so that they can be used, at some point within the evolution of scientific knowledge, to attain a broader, more intense, dense and complex vision of historical knowledge.

22. “a united whole called ‘Morisco’ is constructed with the conclusion that ‘all are one’, only to then be eliminated through expulsion”. Perceval, José María. *Todos son uno. Arquetipos, xenofobia y racismo. La imagen del morisco en la Monarquía Española durante los siglos XVI y XVII*. Almería: Instituto de Estudios Almerienses, 1997: 21-23.

23. “actually understood, deep down, the duality they seek by conceiving an other, but are instead talking, deep down, about themselves”; “wish to speak they must do so within the confines of the imposed discourse if they wish to be understood”. Perceval, José María. *Todos son uno...*: 21.

24. “historians working from below have shown how the imaginative use of source material can illuminate many areas of history which could otherwise have been condemned to remain in the dark”. Sharpe, Jim. “Historia desde abajo...”: 55.



Three meanings are therefore added to the microhistorical or microanalytical task proposed by Ginzburg or Grendi: one refers to sources, one to research objectives, and one to the method of knowledge and the inferences to apply. In effect, what is exceptional in Grendi's use of the word, i.e. the document which cannot be serialised but which is significant for being revealing, is one thing; it is a completely different thing to seek a subject for research which, by being exceptional in nature, could reveal historical facts or processes; and, finally, it is a different thing again to use circumstantial evidence as a mechanism for creating a cognitive paradigm.²⁵

In the light of Christiane Stallaer's denouncement of studies into the Inquisition, in which she declares that

*la avanzada normalización de la Inquisición no ha dado lugar a la exploración de sus posibilidades comparativas. Más bien la historización del tema ha contribuido a particularizarlo como fenómeno histórico típicamente español. Aunque nadie reivindique hoy en día la singularidad (el carácter único, exclusivo) de la Inquisición, el tema sigue siendo tratado así por sus estudiosos.*²⁶

We propose focusing our study from a perspective of universal history, understanding that the social conflicts we analyse and the social betrayal detected—things which took place in the late 15th century in cities such as Xàtiva within the context of the introduction of the Inquisition—are mechanisms of social confrontation that could have arisen at another time, in another place and with another timeline. The interesting thing would be to explain the phenomena and subsequently be able to establish guidelines for comparative analysis.

2. The Denunciation Mechanism. Social Ruin. Mechanisms for the Social Control of the Masses

The Inquisition tried and prosecuted alleged heretics following the relevant denunciation made about an individual or following the interrogation to which people could be subjected if there were indications that they were not leading a wholly Christian life. Said indications could be the result of self-confessions made previously by converted Jews following the promulgation of an edict of grace.

25. Serna, Justo; Pons, Anacleto. "El ojo de la aguja. ¿De qué hablamos cuando hablamos de microhistoria?". *Ayer*, 12 (1993): 115.

26. "the advanced normalisation of the Inquisition has not led to an explanation of its comparative possibilities. Instead, historicisation of the subject has helped compartmentalise it as a historical phenomenon that is typically Spanish. While nobody now espouses the singularity (the unique and exclusive character) of the Inquisition, the subject continues to be treated as such by those studying it". Stallaert, Christiane. *Ni una gota de sangre impura. La España inquisitorial y la Alemania nazi cara a cara*. Barcelona: Círculo de lectores, 2006: 20.



With the edicts of grace promulgated by the Valencian Tribunal of the Inquisition during the early days of its operation, individuals did not initially have their assets confiscated. Instead, they only paid some fines or composite penalties which were levied at a collective level, generally the city. Thus, as shown by García Cárcel, with the edicts of grace from 1484 to 1488, the city of Valencia had to pay 11,720 pounds, Xàtiva 1.000 pounds and Gandia 700 pounds.²⁷ The action of the Inquisition during this early phase reveals, through these figures, the sheer size of the population of converted Jews in the capital of the Kingdom of Valencia and the importance of the converts in Xàtiva, the city with the second highest penalty.

In theory, it was the officials attached to the corresponding Tribunal of the Inquisition who were responsible for denouncing the heretics. In principle, it was a role assigned to the officials of the Inquisition known as *familiares*, as it was one of their main duties, but, as Cerrillo points out, *no destacan por haberla ejercido con demasiado interés ni efectividad*. Similarly, López Vela writes that documentary evidence has not proven the relevant role of *familiares* as informers.²⁸ Bennassar, meanwhile, has shown that it was not necessary to count on *familiares'* zeal in the performance of their policing duties as it was the Inquisition itself which inspired and heartily encouraged denunciation among all the inhabitants of a place, as anyone was accepted as an informer, including heretics, the excommunicated, lowlifes, criminals, even perjurers. The Inquisition turned informing into a holy activity, which was rewarded with indulgences and which positively encouraged informing by not prosecuting false witnesses. And the social control which the institution was able to develop so flawlessly was further reinforced by other factors such as the network of collaborators and informers who, inflated by the prestige of the Inquisition or terrorised by the holy fear it inspired, repeatedly incited spontaneous confessions and denunciations.²⁹ It was also possible to denounce people living in another city, with several witnesses for the Inquisition in Saragossa denouncing converted Jews who lived in Valencia and who were tried by the *Tribunal de Zaragoza*.

We have studied and identified two basic methods of making a denunciation. The first is the most orthodox and is the method which has yielded the documentation used in this paper. This is the legal testimony or denunciation which an individual submits to the relevant officials of the Inquisition and which is accompanied by the corresponding copy of the judicial act drawn up by the notary who attended the legal deposition in question. This document is very similar in formal appearance to that of an interrogation or a confession made by a defendant of the Inquisition within the context of an inquisitorial trial. The difference between the two documents is that in the denunciation the deponent denounces events they have seen or heard

27. García Cárcel, Ricardo. *Orígenes de la inquisición española. El tribunal de Valencia*. Barcelona: Península, 1985: 74.

28. "these were not noted for having performed with much interest or to great effect". Cerrillo, Gonzalo. *Los familiares de la inquisición española*. Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 2000: 219-221. Reference to López Vela: Cerrillo, Gonzalo. *Los familiares...*: 220.

29. Bennassar, Bartolomé. *Inquisición española: poder político y control social*. Barcelona: Crítica, 1981: 112, 116, 337.



regarding another person, without being subjected to any kind of questioning, and it generally appears to give every indication, at least in terms of formal and judicial appearance, of being a spontaneous and voluntary declaration by the person who has made it. By contrast, in the confession of a defendant, the deposition is usually preceded by a question or demand from the corresponding inquisitor and is made against their will.

In the voluntary testifications we have studied, the juridical act is registered by the notary, who first records the date of the deposition, then the first name and surname of the person testifying, their profession and, often, the street on which they live, sometimes accompanied by a geographical clarification to help pinpoint the location of the deponent,³⁰ who was then sworn in.

The notary then copied, seemingly word for word, the informer's declaration before ending the juridical document of the denunciation by noting the name and rank of the officials present when each deposition was made. Two officials are usually recorded in representation of the Inquisition, with any of the following people tending to appear indistinctly at each testification: a *familiar*, a *alguacil* ("bailiff"), a member of the Order of Preachers, a commissioner and a gaoler.³¹

This role call of officials provides an elegant and practical reflection of the day-to-day workings of the Tribunal of the Valencian Inquisition in cities such as Xàtiva, which did not have their own tribunal and thus depended on that of Valencia. Although we have recorded the presence of one of the inquisitors from the Tribunal of Valencia in the city of Xàtiva, what our study of all the testifications we have consulted shows is that, in addition to the obligatory presence of the notary, it was the officials under the Inquisitors General of the Valencian Tribunal—a bailiff, a *familiar*, a commissioner, a Dominican and a gaoler—who performed these operations which underpinned the proper running of the tribunal. These data also confirm the practical relevance of an office like the bailiff, as demonstrated by Cerrillo Cruz, who also gives a clear explanation of all the bailiff's duties; one of which was to accompany the inquisitors on their tour of the district.³² The presence of the bailiff in Xàtiva can be justified by this reasoning.

In the register of depositions we consulted, the depositions are noted in chronological—and presumably consecutive order. There are usually three or four testifications recorded for each day.

The other method for submitting a denunciation was the secret and anonymous denouncement. The discovery of an exceptional document—an original anonymous denunciation preserved within the Historical Archive of the University of Valencia—enables us to analyse this type of denunciation.

30. We suspect that the said geographical clarification, which was often very detailed, was added to help make it easier to locate the deponent during the course of the judicial process.

31. Joan Carrasquer, bailiff; Beltrán de Arrega, *familiar*; Joan de Lapide, Dominican monk; Didaci de Angulo, gaoler; Domingo Gil, commissioner. AUV. Varia, 02-02.

32. Cerrillo, Gonzalo. "Alguaciles mayores de la Inquisición. Alguaciles mayores del Tribunal de Sevilla en el siglo XVIII". *Revista de la Inquisición*, 6 (1997): 163-190.



We have located a denunciation submitted anonymously before the Tribunal of Valencia against a woman native to Orihuela who lived in the city of Valencia. The instrument used is an undated and unsigned letter addressed to the Inquisitor of Valencia. A subsequent note or comment added by the staff of the actual tribunal provides clues to the date of receipt and the method of delivery. At the end of the missive, and in a different hand, written on 12th June 1489 at the Royal Palace of Valencia, then seat of the Valencian Tribunal of the Inquisition, it states that on the previous day at around noon, when the servant of the procurator fiscal of the Tribunal of the Inquisition arrived at the Royal Palace of Valencia he found the aforesaid letter on the floor in the doorway. The letter must therefore have been deposited on the date it was discovered, anonymously and secretly left on the floor at the entrance to the Royal Palace.³³

The denunciation begins with a plea from the denouncer, begging for justice and harshly referring to a *marrana*,³⁴ a term used for Christians of Jewish origin, on the side of both the father and the mother, who was burned in Orihuela. It specifies the name of the father, Franch, and the name of the denounced party, Franca.³⁵ It declares that the father and mother were bad Christians but that she, the denounced party, was an even worse Christian than her parents. She is accused of never having confessed and of practising witchcraft. The denunciation was submitted once again by the same anonymous informer via a second missive, again addressed to the Inquisitor General of Valencia. In this second letter of denunciation, it says that a few days earlier a letter of denunciation had been left at the door of the Inquisitor's residence and that no action had been taken against the accused, so the author had decided to repeat the denunciation. In the second denunciation, the informer has added a list of neighbours in Valencia who could confirm everything that had been claimed in the first missive, and has added new accusations.

This is not the place to be analysing this interesting denunciation,³⁶ as all that we wish to highlight here is the typology of a secret and anonymous denunciation, having had the opportunity to access the original documents thereof. The second denunciation could indicate that, despite the gravity of the facts denounced in the first missive, the members of the Tribunal of the Inquisition preferred to act upon named denunciations, in which the testimony of judicial witnesses could be used to support the subsequent inquisitorial process on judicial grounds, whereas the first totally anonymous and secret letter could have left the inquisitors without solid juridical arguments for intervention. The fact that the second denunciation includes a long list of witnesses suggests that the most widely used and preferred method of the Valencian Tribunal of the Inquisition was judicial action based on

33. The document is written in very good handwriting with very clear lettering and can thus be read very easily, which reveals the educated background of its author or that it could have been written to order by another person, perhaps even a notary.

34. It is interesting to note that the denouncer uses the term *marrana* to refer to the woman she/he is denouncing.

35. A note in the right-hand margin states that Franca lives in the house of La Boneta.

36. We shall conduct an in-depth study of the scope of this denunciation within another paper.



named testifications which could be used in evidence during the unfolding of the inquisitorial process.³⁷

During the first few years in which the Tribunal of the Inquisition began operating in the Kingdom of Valencia, the tribunals would move from place to place,³⁸ as small and medium-sized cities such as Xàtiva did not have their own inquisitorial tribunal; the tribunal in Valencia had jurisdiction over the city of Xàtiva. In these cases, the Inquisition's activity depended on the actions taken by the ministers of the tribunal, who would travel from one place to another, gathering testimonies and initiating the corresponding proceedings. The subsequent centralisation of the tribunals in the corresponding capital cities meant the development of a new procedural system, with an annual visit theoretically being paid each year, in which an inquisitor would visit an area of a district covered by the tribunal to encourage denunciations and initiate the corresponding inquisitorial proceedings.³⁹ In the testifications we have studied for this paper, there are often denunciations made in Xàtiva denouncing individuals who were at that time living in the city of Valencia. A group of women who made various denunciations against converts in Xàtiva even claimed that they could denounce many more converts, both in Xàtiva and Valencia.

Both in the city in which the tribunal was based and in its corresponding districts, the inquisitorial procedure usually began with the reading of a general sermon or the edict of grace either in the city's cathedral or in the main church in those towns and cities without their own diocese.⁴⁰ All Christians were obliged to attend this reading, which aimed to instil orthodox belief among those present and to encourage the denouncement of neighbours who were failing to comply with Christian standards or who committed acts of heresy or blasphemy. They also sought to encourage self-confession, which would be rewarded in the corresponding edict of grace. Those attending this general sermon were given 40 days' plenary indulgence, while those who collaborated with the Inquisition in its mission would receive three years' plenary indulgence. During the 'period of grace' which was established following the sermon and lasted from 30 to 40 days, or even up to three months, they would

37. Nor should we disregard the fact that the Valencian Tribunal of the Inquisition was then occupied almost exclusively in persecuting and prosecuting crypto-Judaism, and therefore denunciations involving witchcraft did not rank highly with the members of the tribunal at that time.

38. Haliczzer, Stephen. *Inquisición y sociedad en el Reino de Valencia 1478-1834*. Valencia: Alfons el Magnànim, 1993: 103.

39. Tausiet, María. *Ponzoña en los ojos...*: 83.

40. It may seem incongruent to speak of a city without a cathedral, as the binomial *civitas*-cathedral appears to be indissoluble, but in the Kingdom of Valencia and with regard to the operation of the tribunals of the Inquisition, there are towns such as Orihuela, granted city status in 1437, and Alicante, granted city status in 1490, which did not have a cathedral and which even came under a diocese in another kingdom, coming under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Cartagena-Murcia, who was based within the Kingdom of Castile, while Orihuela and Alicante belonged to the Crown of Aragon from 1296 and then the Kingdom of Valencia from 1304.



receive the denunciations and self-confessions.⁴¹ By contrast, Christians who did not denounce or confess these kinds of heretical actions would be condemned to excommunication.

In the Kingdom of Valencia, the period of grace was even longer than the theoretical three months given, sometimes lasting up to six months.⁴² However on certain occasions, when a subsequent edict of grace was published, the 'grace' period could be drastically reduced. In 1627, following the standard three months granted to Portuguese converted Jews, the grace period was limited to six days.⁴³

During the reading of the edict of grace, a list was read out of the heretical acts⁴⁴ which were punishable, thereby encouraging them to be denounced or confessed.

We have located an exceptional document: an edict of denunciations⁴⁵ promulgated by the Inquisitor Pere Sans⁴⁶ in the city of Xàtiva on 24th November 1487, which was to be executed in the town of Cocentaina and was addressed to Pere Bosch, presbyter of the church in Cocentaina. It contained the order that every person *de cualquier grado, condición, estamento, orden, religión, dignidad o preeminencia*⁴⁷ was ordered to denounce to presbyter Pere Bosch —on pain of excommunication and within six days of the reading or promulgation of the edict in Cocentaina— a series of heresies or crimes against the faith which were listed in detail in the edict. They were urged to report if they had knowledge of or had seen or heard

*Si sabían o habían visto u oído, que alguna persona vecina o habitadora de la villa, o que se encontraba fuera del reino de Valencia, vivo o muerto, había actuado como hereje, había dogmatizado contra los santos artículos de la fe, o fuese sospechosa o tuviese fama de realizar prácticas heréticas celebrando ceremonias judaicas, o personas que habían pronunciado blasfemias o abominaciones contra Jesucristo, la virgen o los santos o realicen invocaciones a espíritus malignos, o pronuncien blasfemias heréticas contra Dios, o usen de sortilegios o tengan libros de nigromancia o de reservada lectura.*⁴⁸

41. González de Caldas, Victoria. *¿Judíos o cristianos? El Proceso de Fe Santa Inquisitio*. Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2000: 113 and 226-227.

42. García Cárcel, Ricardo. *Orígenes de la inquisición española...*: 190.

43. González de Caldas, Victoria. *¿Judíos o cristianos?...:* 227.

44. Halczer, Stephen. *Inquisición y sociedad en el Reino de Valencia...*: 103.

45. A definition of the edict of denunciations is given in: Jiménez Monteserín, Miguel. "Léxico inquisitorial", *Historia de la Inquisición en España y América. Vol. I: El pensamiento científico y el proceso histórico de la institución (1478-1834)*, Joaquín Pérez Villanueva, Bartolomé Escandell, eds. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1984: 197.

46. Pere Sans de la Calancha, Canon of Palencia, was appointed Inquisitor of Valencia alongside Juan Lop de Cigales in March 1487. They were then removed from office in 1488. The reasons for their dismissal and the grounds for their short mandate on the Tribunal de Valencia remain unknown. García Cárcel, Ricardo. *Orígenes de la inquisición Española...*: 75-76.

47. "regardless of their rank, condition, class, order, religion, position or pre-eminence". AUV. Varia 01-11, without folio (24th November 1478. Xàtiva).

48. "any person resident in the town or beyond the Kingdom of Valencia, living or dead, who has acted as a heretic, preached against the sacred articles of faith or been suspected of or reputed to have performed heretical practices by holding Jewish ceremonies, or persons who have uttered blasphemies or abominations against Jesus Christ, the Virgin or the saints, or who invoke evil spirits or utter heretical



They also had to denounce those *a los que siendo cristianos, vivían como gentiles, judíos o musulmanes, en su vida y costumbres, con un tipo de vida y costumbres que sean diferentes a la común vida de los cristianos haciendo cosas contra la santa fe católica*.⁴⁹ It also warned people to watch over and observe the converted Jews who had been reconciled, to avoid blame or greater punishment in the event that they admitted to having confessed false crimes, or if those condemned or burned were found to have evaded the confiscation of assets by the royal treasury.

The document provides us with relevant data, including the action taken by individual inquisitors such as Pere Sans, who was then Inquisitor of the Tribunal of Valencia together with Juan Lop de Cigales. Being issued from Xàtiva, the order also provides another valuable piece of information: that the Inquisitor was in Xàtiva on that day, possibly taking inquisitorial action against the converted Jews in that city.⁵⁰

But the most significant aspect of this unprecedented document is that it allows us to analyse the applied practical mechanisms of the tools used by the Valencian Tribunal of the Inquisition to enable it to encourage denouncement during its first few years in operation. In this case, and faced with the theoretical regulations governing how the inquisitors should proceed in order to obtain denunciations, which were to be found in Eimeric's famous inquisitors' handbook, which states that the inquisitorial commissioner must *recibir todas las delaciones, informaciones y acusaciones de quien sea, contra quien sea (dentro de la jurisdicción de la diócesis)*,⁵¹ the edict of denunciations promulgated by one of the inquisitors of the Tribunal of Valencia clearly orders that the denunciations should be received and taken by Pere Bosch, presbyter of the church of Cocentaina. The wording of the document also states that any individual —be they Christian, Jewish or Muslim— was able to make a denunciation and that similarly anybody could be denounced, as, in addition to the crimes of heresy applicable exclusively to Christians, Jews and Muslims could be denounced for blasphemy, performing magical practices, invoking spirits and so forth.

Such coercion or social pressure, which was repeatedly applied year after year in the early years of the Inquisition through the promulgation of the edicts of denunciations and the edicts of grace, must have had a devastating effect on the conscience of individuals who were subjected to it by the inquisitors and preachers and who had to propagate it in their daily life and within their closest circles; among neighbours, co-workers, family members, servants, apprentices and the like.

blasphemies against God, or who use spells and charms or have books on necromancy or of restricted reading". AUV. Varia 01-11, without folio.

49. "who, while Christians, lived as Gentiles, Jews or Muslims in their life and customs, with a way of life and customs other than the common life of Christians, performing acts against the Holy Catholic Faith". AUV. Varia 01-11, without folio.

50. In the testifications we have studied, references are made to convert Jews detained by the Inquisition, to others in the gaol and to converted Jews of Xàtiva who had been burned.

51. "receive all denunciations, reports and accusations regardless of who makes them and whom they are made against (within the jurisdiction of the diocese)". Eimeric, Nicolau; Peña, Francisco. *El manual de los inquisidores*, ed. Luís Sala-Molins. Barcelona: Muchnik, 1983: 126.



The daily life of each individual must have been affected in one way or another; as someone who could have been denounced for deeds committed in the past, or by feeling forced to denounce acts they had seen or heard at some point in their life.

The document we have used for this research, while incomplete, does show every indication of being a set of accusatory testifications made following a general sermon and its corresponding edict of grace, as the denunciations have been made during the space of three months from 15th November 1489 to 29th January 1490;⁵² a period which coincides with the usual period of grace granted in the edicts promulgated by the Valencian Tribunal of the Inquisition. During this period, the inquisitorial team at the Tribunal of Valencia was comprised by the monks Miquel de Monterrubio, Prior of the Monastery of Dueñas, Fray Diego Magdaleno, Prior of the Monastery of San Alfonso de Toro and Joan Ardiles, who worked as an advisor alongside his predecessor, Soler, who continued to perform his duties.⁵³

The document comprises a set of depositions featuring a chronological list of denunciations made mostly by residents of Xàtiva who are denouncing deeds they have 'seen or heard' committed by fellow residents and which may be actions of a heretical nature. Most of the denunciations concern actions which we could file under crypto-Judaism and, following the typology established by David Romano, would cover the beliefs, religious practices, food standards, worship and cultural ceremonies proper to Valencian Judaism as studied by the author.⁵⁴ Another interesting aspect of this document is that the denunciations mostly cover actions that were considered heretical when practised by Christians, as they were deemed Jewish ceremonies.⁵⁵

The sense of deposition is clearly seen in one of the declarations made on 24th November 1489, *lo qual paper ell tes porta al reverent inquisidor e lo dit reverent inquisidor mana aquell cosir al peu o costat de la present deposició*.⁵⁶

The denunciations made during these proceedings mostly concern recollections of events witnessed or heard several years before—even up to 20 or 30 years previously—and are one-off events that the witnesses claim to have seen and, on occasions, heard. Which is not to say that they did not happen: what is powerfully striking is that, other than events expressly reported in the denunciation as being

52. The document includes two denunciations which fall outside of the document's original timeframe: one from 1482 and another from 1486, in unnumbered folios which appear to have been incorporated or sewn into the register but which do not appear in the original codex.

53. García Cárcel, Ricardo. *Orígenes de la inquisición española...*: 76.

54. Romano, David. "Creencias y prácticas religiosas de los judíos de Valencia (1461-1492). Propuestas metodológicas a base de documentos inquisitoriales", *Lluís de Santàngel i el seu temps. Actes del Congrés Internacional (València, 5-8 d'Octubre 1987)*. Valencia: Ajuntament de València, 1992: 432-448.

55. We have compiled a study into the religious beliefs and cultural practices of converted Jews in Xàtiva. Barrio, Juan Antonio. "Los conversos de judío en la ciudad de Xàtiva: creencias y prácticas religiosas (1439-1490) a través de la visión del 'otro'". *Medievalismo*, 23 (2013): 61-99.

56. "The witness gave the mentioned sheet of paper to the Reverend Inquisitor and the mentioned Reverend Inquisitor ordered the paper to be sewn at the bottom or the side of the present deposition". AUV, Varia 02-02, f. 150r. (24th November 1489).



systematically observed, most are events seen or heard by the denouncers just the once, suddenly and accidentally.

3. The Denouncers. Betrayal and Social Upheaval

One of the first questions we must ask tackles the root of the denunciation, looking at what drives an individual to denounce their neighbour or a member of their family. We would do well to open our investigation with the words of García Cárcel describing *una sociedad pobre de medios y de ideas, dividida en múltiples facturas, dispuesta siempre a la denuncia del otro como manera de olvidar su propia infelicidad*.⁵⁷

The list of denouncers, featuring their name, profession and social status, can provide a clue to the role of 'social breakdown' and social reversal in permitting the introduction of the Tribunal of the Inquisition and its operation in cities such as Xàtiva.

One of the most relevant pieces of data comes with cross-referencing the surnames on the list of denouncers (see the Appendix) with the list of converted Jews who were tried by the Valencian Inquisition in the city of Xàtiva between the late 15th century and the end of the 16th century.⁵⁸ Among the denouncers featured in the depositions we have analysed, not a single one of their surnames matches the surnames of the converted Jews in Xàtiva.⁵⁹ The obvious conclusion to draw is that the individuals who made these denunciations were mainly long-standing Christians.

Through this small documentary sample and this microhistorical study, we have shown that a large part of the denunciations upon which the converted Jews were tried came from long-established Christians who personally knew the people they were denouncing.

4. Conclusions

The social guidelines forged and developed in the towns and cities of the Kingdom of Valencia by considerable effort from most of the social sectors and dominant groups involved —the monarchy, nobility, urban ruling classes and the like—

57. "a society poor in means and ideas, divided into many factions, with people always ready to denounce one another as a way of forgetting their own unhappiness". García Cárcel, Ricardo. "Prólogo...": 17.

58. I have produced three different lists of converted Jews tried in Xàtiva. Two are unpublished and one has been compiled using as its source the list of converted Jews tried by the Inquisition which was published by Milagros García Cárcel. See: Barrio, Juan Antonio. "La comunidad de conversos de judío de la ciudad de Xàtiva en el siglo XV", *Homenaje al profesor José Hinojosa Montalvo*, forthcoming; García Cárcel, Ricardo. *Orígenes de la Inquisición Española...*: 249-314.

59. With the sole exception of Joan Sanç, who was denounced and who also submitted a deposition against two converted Jews, the notary Ausiàs Costa and Joan Alcañiz.



brought forth ways for Christians, Jews and Muslims to coexist and socialise within the cities of the Kingdom of Valencia which had been incorporated into Western Christendom following the conquest by Jaime I. The city of Xàtiva was one of the cities to develop this model of ethnic, economic, social and juridical coexistence.

The events of 1391 marked the point at which this model of peaceful coexistence began to be turned on its head; coexistence which had been sustained with only minor scares and no major problems from the pacification of the Mudejar uprisings in the second half of the 13th century through to the late 14th century.

The conversion of thousands of Jews to Christianity following those grave events of 1391 marked the slow road towards the end of the model of sociability which had been created following the conquest of the Kingdom of Valencia.⁶⁰

The second half of the 15th century was then marked by profound social and economic transformations which were to put an end to this model of ethnic and religious tolerance. The events that were to mark the end of one stage and the beginning of another are the introduction of the Spanish Inquisition in the Kingdom of Valencia in 1481 and the expulsion of the Jews in 1492. These two events and the persecution to which converted Jews were subjected not only by the inquisitors but also by members of the working classes, who became the bastions and defenders of a new model of sociability, were to put an end to tolerance and pave the way for intolerance. People's attitudes, the attitudes of the other, were controlled and watched over through the new mechanisms of horizontal social control which were rolled out, propagated and driven by the inquisitorial authorities and which encouraged the old Christians to watch over, control and, where appropriate, denounce the converted Jews who were their neighbours, co-workers, partners, customers, bosses and so forth and who either honoured crypto-Jewish religious practices, festivities, dietary requirements and the like or did not rigorously perform Christian religious practices.

Other works on other historical subjects have spoken of the Spain which could have been but was not.⁶¹ Taking this assertion and extrapolating it to the situation in which the Kingdom of Valencia found itself at the tail end of the Middle Ages, the introduction of the Spanish Inquisition dramatically shattered the Spain or the Kingdom of Valencia which could have been but then never was. As a whole, the kingdoms of Spain went from being one of the most ethnically and religiously tolerant societies in Christian Western Europe to one of the most intolerant. Denunciations and the fermenting and fomenting of social betrayal are merely examples of these new ways of social intolerance, of broken-down coexistence and social reversal. Thus the Inquisition, with the deployment of its political and legal instruments, became the 'guardian of sociability'; a role in which elements of the working classes, who were mainly veteran Christians, collaborated with greater or lesser zeal.

60. Regarding the impact of attacks on the Valencian Jewish quarter in 1391. See: Hinojosa Montalvo, José. *The Jews of the Kingdom of Valencia from Persecution to Expulsion, 1391-1492*. Jerusalem: Magnes Press-The Hebrew University, 1993.

61. García Fitz, Francisco. "Una 'España musulmana, sometida y tributaria'? La España que no fue". *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos*, 31 (2004): 227-248.



Appendix

This Appendix gives the surname and the first name of the defendant or the denouncer, followed by their trade and the street on which they lived. For women, a surname in parentheses is that of the husband, as we have been unable to find the woman's own surname within the documentation. We have added the date of denunciation to the list of informers.

List of Converted Jews from Xàtiva denounced in the testimony at the end of 1489⁶²

Alcañiz, Joanot, confectioner, La Puerta de Santa Tecla street.
 (Alcañiz), Violante, wife of Joanot Alcañiz, confectioner.
 Alcañiz, Isabel, daughter of Joan Alcañiz.
 Alcañiz, Joan, tailor, Placeta dels Morellos square (1489). Corretgeria street (1482).
 (Alcañiz), Eleonor, wife of Joan Alcañiz.
 Alcañiz, Pere.
 Alcañiz, Joan, tailor.
 Alcañiz, Joan, tailor, arrested one day before being denounced by the inquisitors.
 Alcañiz, Guillén, being held prisoner by the Tribunal of Valencia at the time of the denunciation.
 Alcañiz, Guillen, merchant.
 (Alcañiz), Violante, daughter of Joan Alcañiz.
 (Amoros), Rulla, wife of Joan Amoros, merchant, and daughter of Joan Castellar.
 (Arenos), Beatriz, wife of Pere Arenos, merchant, and daughter of Joan Castellar.
 Avinyo, Joan, procurator fiscal.
 Ayora, Joan, tailor, Corretgeria street.
 Bellvis, father of Galceran Bellvis.
 (Bellvis), mother of Galceran Bellvis.
 Bellvis, Galceran.
 (Bellvis), Violante, wife of Galceran Bellvis.
 (Bonafonat), wife of Joan Bonafonat.
 Bonafonat, Joan, silversmith, deceased, formerly resident in Gandía.
 Borja, Joan, doublet maker, living in the Pallaria area of Valencia at the time of the denunciation.
 (Borja), daughter of Torina, aunt of Joan Borja's wife, Corretgeria street, living in Valencia at the time of the denunciation.
 (Bormey), father-in-law of Gaspar Bormey, hosier.
 (Bormey), Violante, wife of Gaspar Bormey, hosier.
 (Bormey), mother-in-law of Gaspar Bormey, hosier.
 (Bormey), brother-in-law of Gaspar Bormey, hosier.

62. AUV. Varia, 02-02.



(Bormey), second brother-in-law⁶³ of Gaspar Bormey, hosier.
 Borraz, son of Borraz 'The Lame', tailor.
 Borraz, Luis, hosier.
 (Borraz), wife of Borraz 'The Lame', tailor.
 Borraz, Antoni.
 (Borraz), Isabel, wife of Antoni Borraz.
 Borraz, second son⁶⁴ of Borraz 'The Lame', tailor.
 Borraz, 'The Lame', tailor.
 (Boyl), wife of Luis Boyl.
 Boyl, Luis, silversmith, deceased. Resident in Gandia 20 years previously.
 Castellar, Joan, living in Tarastana.
 (Castellar), Blanquina, wife of Joan Castellar.
 (Castellar), Isabel, wife of Francesc Castellar.
 Coscolla, Francesc, tailor, deceased. Formerly resident in Gandia.
 Costa, Luis, apothecary.
 Costa, Ausias, notary.
 (Delgado Castellano), first sister (first name unknown) of deceased Fernando, Valencia Market.
 (Delgado Castellano), second sister (first name unknown) of deceased Fernando, Valencia Market.
 (Delgado Castellano), third sister (first name unknown) of deceased Fernando, Valencia Market.
 (Delgado Castellano), daughter (first name unknown) of deceased Fernando Delgado Castellano, Valencia Market.
 (Fullus Misage), Isabel, wife of Francesc Fullus Misage.
 Fullus Misage, Francesc.
 (Fuster), wife of Jaume Fuster, silversmith.
 Gines, Manuel, butcher, native of Orihuela.
 Guasch, Francesc, deceased. Lived in Gandía 20 years previously.
 Guasch, Luis, hosier.
 Guasch, members of Joan Guasch's family.
 Guasch, Joan.
 (Guasch), wife of Francesc Guasch.
 (Joan), Franci, Andolça, wife of Franci Joan, merchant, and daughter of Joan Castellar.
 Wife of Jaume 'The Oven Shoveller', 'young man of Xàtiva'.
 Malferit, tailor, Corretgeria street.
 (Malferit), wife of Malferit, tailor.
 Merina, female friend of Martorell.
 Moneros, sister of Joan Moneros.

63. The denunciation states that the brothers of Isabel, wife of Gaspar Bormey, hosier, have been denounced but does not specify the number of brothers, so we have listed the minimum number: two.

64. The denunciation states that the sons of Borraz 'The Lame', tailor, have been denounced, so we have listed the minimum number: two.



Moneros, second sister⁶⁵ of Joan Moneros.
 (Moneros), mother-in-law of Joan Moneros.
 (Moneros), wife of Joan Moneros.
 (Muñoz), Gracia, mother-in-law of Pau Muñoz.
 Muñoz, Pau, deceased, notary from Valencia, formerly resident in Los Castellanos street in Valencia.
 (Muñoz), Isabel, wife of Pau Muñoz.
 Nadal, Galceran, absent.
 Nadal, (first name unknown).
 Nadal, Luis, silversmith and merchant, Argentería street.
 (Nadal), Florencia, wife of Luis Nadal, Argentería street.
 (Olmer), Brianda, wife of Luis Olmer and daughter of Jaume Torregrosa, senior.
 Pintor, 'The Bearded One', matchmaker, father-in-law of Joan Alcañiz through his first wife.
 Pisa, Nicolau de.
 Sanchiz, Joan, tailor, deceased.
 (Sanz), wife of Joan Sanz, shopkeeper.
 (Sanz), Natilsa, widow, Los Catalanes street in Valencia.
 Sanz, Michalet, son of Natilsa Sanz.
 (Saranyana), wife of Luis Saranyana.
 Seguet, Luis, shopkeeper.
 Solanes, Mudejar site contractor.
 (Solanes), wife of Solanes, Mudejar site contractor.
 Tamarit, Bernat, living in Valencia.
 Tenllols, tailor, deceased. Resident of Gandía for 20 years.
 Torina, aunt of Joan Borja's wife, Corretgeria street, living in Valencia at the time of the denunciation.
 Torregrosa, uncle of Brianda Olmer, the daughter of Jaume Torregrosa, senior, living in Valencia.
 (Torregrosa), Damiata, wife of Galceran Torregrosa, junior, Argentería street.
 Torregrosa, Galceran, senior, silversmith, Argentería street.
 Torregrosa, Galceran, junior, silversmith, Argentería street.
 (Torregrosa), Blanca, wife of Galceran Torregrosa, Argentería street.
 Torregrosa, Jaume, senior, silversmith, Argentería street.
 (Torregrosa), Aldonça, wife of Jaume Torregrosa, senior, Argentería street.
 Torregrosa, Jaume, junior, silversmith.
 (Torregrosa), wife of Jaume Torregrosa, junior.
 Torregrosa, Joan.
 (Torregrosa), wife of Joan Torregrosa.
 Tristan, Joan, shopkeeper, La Plaza de la Ciudad street.
 Tuscany, Caranyana, sister of Joan Tuscany.

65. The denunciation states that the sisters of Joan Moneros are being denounced. The number of sisters is not specified, so we have therefore included the minimum number: two.



(Tuscany), Graciosa, wife of Joan Tuscany, alias Malferit

List in alphabetical order of denouncers in the 1489 deposition in the city of Xàtiva⁶⁶

- (Albarrazi), Pereta, widow of Luis Albarrazi, cloth shearer. 26th November 1489.
 Alcamora, Joan, wool carder. 20th November 1489.
 Ana, Julián de, tailor, resident of Valencia. 16th November 1489.
 Aparici, Nofre, merchant. 25th November 1489.
 Audies, Pere, tailor from the Castello area of Xàtiva. 27th November 1489.
 Bernat, Jordi, farm worker, living beside the castle. 24th November 1489.
 (Bernat), Miquela, wife of farm worker Jordi Bernat. 24th November 1489.
 (Blesa), Isabel, wife of Miquel Blesa, wool carder, Argenteria street. 24th November 1489.
 (Blesa), Isabel, wife of Joan Blesa, metalworker. Market. 29th November 1489.
 (Bonança), Elsa, widow of Steve Bonança, notary, living in the house of Joan Figuera, swordsmith, on Corretgeria street. 23rd November 1489.
 (Bonança), Elsa, wife of Ferre Bonança, citizen of Xàtiva. D'En Lluís Estany Donzell street. 8th December 1489.
 Cabater, Tomas, wool carder, Argenteria street. 15th November 1489.
 Canamaz, Catalina, living in the house of Francesc Vinader, royal notary, in the city of Valencia. 30th June 1489.
 Candea, Francesc, farm worker, Blanca street in Xàtiva. 21st November 1489.
 (Carbo), Joana, wife of Luis Carbo, delinquent from the Pobla de Corts area. 9th December 1489.
 Carbonell, Andreu, alias Belda, cloth shearer, Corretgeria street. 21st November 1489.
 Carbonell, Bernart, worker. 23rd November 1489.
 (Clara), Catalina, wife of Bernat Clara, farm worker, Fuente del Ángel street. 23rd November 1489.
 (Corts), Beatriz, 12-year-old maid, daughter of Bernat Corts, farm worker from La Ollaria, at the house of Mosén Cruillas. 27th November 1489.
 Crespina, female slave of Luis Costa. 25th November 1489.
 Dealos, Joan, citizen, Los Escribanos street (near the old carpenter's workshop). 6th December 1489.
 Desi, Miquel, crossbowman, Placeta de los Judíos square. 16th November 1489.
 (Domenech), Ausiana, wife of draper Jaume Domenech. 6th December 1489.
 (Esmont), Catalina, maid and wife of Bernat Esmont, farm worker.
 Enguerot, Bertomeu, wool carder, Ostal del Castella street. 6th December 1489.

66. AUV. Varia, 02-02. We have excluded from the list a woman who was denounced and then interrogated by the Inquisition as a result of said denunciation and who therefore appears on the list of depositions. The woman in question is (Malferit), Isabel, wife of Bernat Malferit, tailor. 8th December 1489.



- Ferrer, Joan, worker, resident of Valencia. 30th June 1489.
- Fito, Damiata, maid, daughter of Pere Fito of Montesa, living in the house of Sancho, worker. 20th November 1489.
- Fito, Luis, student, Sant Pere street (near the market). 24th November 1489.
- (Jaffer), Barona, Caterina, wife of Joan Jaffer, farm worker, Camino de los Pescadores street. 4th July 1489.
- Lopez, Bernart, farm worker. 19th November 1489.
- Martinez, Joan, barber, Les Barreres. 18th November 1489.
- Maulion, Guillen, shoemaker, living in the house of Mestre Audria Lombart, shoemaker, on Xàtiva square. 25th November 1489.
- Miralles, Asensio, citizen, Plaçeta de Entorrent square near the Jewish quarter. 21st November 1489.
- Monfort, Francesc, notary. 28th November 1489.
- (Navarro), Catalina, daughter of Bernat Navarro (deceased), maid in the house of Francesc Joan, notary. 29th January 1490.
- (Palau), Damiata, wife of Bernart Palau, farmer, resident of Valencia. 16th December 1486.
- Pertusa, Francesc, young nobleman. 29th November 1489.
- Pineda, Ausias, wool carder, Plaza de los Judíos square. 25th November 1489.
- (Quiliz), Joana, widow of Miquel Quiliz, living in the house of Monseigneur Joan de Sant Ramon. 23rd November 1489.
- Ridaure, Bernat, farmer, living in the Jewish quarter. 15th November 1489.
- (Roca), Isabel, widow of Luis Roca, squire, living in the house of baker Luis Caranyana. 22nd November 1489.
- Rodrigo Osorio, Joan, tanner, La Curtidoria street. 28th November 1489.
- Rosell, Luis, presbyter of Valencia. 18th October 1482.
- Sanç, Joan, 17th November 1489.
- (Stonya) Damiata, wife of the 'magnificent' Luis Stonya, young nobleman, Placeta dels Morellos square. 16th November 1489.
- Tolça Negre, Joan. 15th November 1489.
- Tora, Ausias, town worker, Xàtiva Market. 16th November 1489.
- Tortalla, Pere, gravedigger, living on the street that leads to Las Parras. 21st November 1489.
- (Vilar), Isabel, wife of Joan Vilar, shopkeeper. Plaza de la Cal. 20th November 1489.



SEIGNEURIAL PRESSURE: EXTERNAL CONSTRICTIONS AND STIMULI IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF URBAN COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES IN 15TH CENTURY CASTILE

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ABSTRACT

Seigneurial pressure, exerted on cities and towns and their municipal jurisdictions by the nobility, constituted one of the dominant traits of Castilian politics in the 15th century. Notwithstanding the extent and intensity that this pressure might reach in general, few cities and towns were subjected to the (individual or coordinated) actions of important numbers of noblemen. This was the case of the city of Cuenca. This was one of the reasons explaining the relative success achieved by the city in fighting these agresions. The presence of a significant number of noblemen, each of them seeking their own interest, lessened (relatively) their ability to deprecate Cuenca's hinterland. This constriction (over the city and its jurisdiction) also influenced both elites and commoners to adopt a cooperative line of action. This way, Cuenca body politic laid out the key political traits of its communal political identity. These policies and marks of identity were observed throughout the years of civil war and, at least, until the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth I, when the pressure exerted by the nobility was reduced to a reasonable dimension.¹

KEYWORDS

Fifteenth century, Crown of Castile, Towns, Cuenca, Noble depredations, Political Identity.

CAPITALIA VERBA

XV saeculum, Castellae Corona, Civitates, Concha, Cobilium Cepraedationes, Identitas Politica.

1. Introduction: a century of cities 'striving for life'

Political life on the stage of 15th century Castile was extraordinarily convulsive. This is perfectly illustrated by the long minority of John II (1406-1454, his minority lasting from 1406 to 1419) and the conflicts between his regents, which disrupted life in the kingdom for decades; the civil wars which set sectors of the nobility against the monarchy during the reigns of John II and his son, Henry IV (1454-1474); the dynastic problems regarding the succession of Henry IV and its aftermath, the war between the partisans of Joan 'the Beltraneja', daughter of Henry IV, and the would-be queen Elizabeth I (1474-1504), half sister of Henry IV.²

Within this political frame, the presence, projection and intensity with which the nobility traditionally participated in the political construction of the respective kingdoms and principalities, acquired a new dimension, accentuated by the simplicity with which partisan debate (and conflict) entered the political life of the Crown of Castile during the 15th century. Throughout this period, the monarchs—especially Henry IV—made continuous calls to the cities and towns of the kingdom, ordering them to call up their militias to put down rebellions by the nobles, of which there were many, for example: July 1420, January 1432, November 1433, April 1436, November 1437, July 1440, March 1441, April 1460, September 1464, and August 1467.³

The difficulties faced by the Castilian kings during this thorny period, which ended with the advent of the Elizabethan monarchy, explain the extremely important political role adopted by the nobility (especially the high and middle nobility). In this context, pressure was put on the royal domain by high and middle-

1. This study forms part of the research project *Ciudad y nobleza en la Castilla de la Baja Edad Media: la (re) construcción de un marco de relaciones competitivo* (HAR2013-42787-P), funded by the Ministry of Economy and Knowledge of the Government of Spain. Used Abbreviations: AMC, Archivo Municipal de Cuenca; LLAA, Libros de Actas.

2. Regarding these matters see: Valdeón, Julio. *Los conflictos sociales en el reino de Castilla en los siglos XIV y XV*. Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1975; Valdeón, Julio. "Las Cortes de Castilla y las luchas políticas del siglo XV (1419-1430)". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 3 (1966): 293-326; Valdeón, Julio. "Las oligarquías urbanas", *Concejos y ciudades en la Edad Media hispánica. II Congreso de Estudios Medievales*. Madrid: Fundación Sánchez Albornoz, 1990: 509-521. Also: Quintanilla, María Concepción. "El protagonismo nobiliario en la Castilla bajomedieval. Una revisión historiográfica (1984-1997)". *Medievalismo. Boletín de la Asociación Española de Estudios Medievales*, 7 (1997): 187-233. On King Henry IV's reign, see: Esteban, Asunción. *Las ciudades castellanas en tiempos de Enrique IV: Estructura social y conflictos*. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1985. And, with respect to the nobility and the constitution of parties in the kingdom and in the urban areas, see: Franco, Alfonso. "El proceso de señorialización de las tierras palentinas en la Baja Edad Media. El caso del condado de Saldaña", *Fuentes documentales y Edad Media. Actas del II Congreso de Historia de Palencia (27-29 de abril de 1989)*, María Valentina Calleja, coord. Palencia: Diputación Provincial de Palencia, 1990: II, 511-528; Ladero, Miguel Ángel. "Linajes, bandos y parcialidades en la vida política de las ciudades castellanas (siglos XIV y XV)", *Bandos y querellas dinásticas en España al final de la Edad Media. Actas del Coloquio celebrado en la Biblioteca Española de París (15 y 16 de mayo de 1987)*. Champigny-sur-Marne: Cuadernos de la Biblioteca Española, 1991: 105-134.

3. AMC. LLAA. leg. 81, exp. 1, ff. 1v-2r; leg. 188, exp. 3, ff. 2r-3r; leg. 188, exp. 5, ff. 5r-v; leg. 189, exp. 2, f. 58r; leg. 189, exp. 6, ff. 25v-26r; leg. 190, exp. 2, ff. 22v-23v; leg. 190, exp. 3, f. 29r; leg. 195, exp. 1, ff. 26r-v; leg. 196, exp. 2, ff. 114r-115v; leg. 198, exp. 1, ff. 28v-29v.

ranking noblemen whose aim was to deprive it of important power areas (offices, rents and taxes, lands and men). Evidently, this pressure was not only or mainly exercised at court but directed generally towards the places where the objects of their interest lay, directly affecting relations between noblemen and royal towns. However, in cases where towns showed they were able to defend themselves from these voracious attacks, the rapaciousness of the noblemen was redirected against the towns' municipal jurisdictions, that is, the surrounding countryside over which territory towns exercised seigneurial rights. Nonetheless, the pressure of the nobles varied according to the capacity of each nobleman to act in this environment, as reflected in a document dated 21st September 1433, in which the city of Cuenca complained to King John II about [...] *çiertas cabsas, debates e questiones de algunas tomas e ocupaciones e inversiones de çiertos terminos, lugares, jurisdicciones e exydos* [...] perpetrated by the neighbouring nobility on the city's municipal jurisdiction.⁴ This document lists all the predatory actions resorted to by the noblemen: 'seizures' (the illegal imposition of economic sanctions and the appropriation of goods by individuals, committed within the city's municipal jurisdiction), 'invasions' (the use of land—usually virgin land—without a license from the town), and 'occupations' (the effective segregation from the town's jurisdiction of some of its rural districts); together with the areas usually affected by their actions: 'rural districts' (non-populated areas in the municipal jurisdiction), 'villages' (populated areas subjected to the lordship of the city), 'jurisdictions' (referring to the usurpation of the city's jurisdictional rights), and 'common lands' (land destined for pasture and opened for use by both the villagers and citizens of Cuenca). For most cities and towns, opposing these aggressions was a difficult task as they faced a [...] *sennor poderoso en esta tierra*.⁵

Indeed, cities and towns attracted the bulk of the nobility's predatory aspirations as they not only constituted the primary administrative centre for the management and collection of royal rents and taxes but, in the area south of the river Duero, they controlled large municipal jurisdictions and exercised power over large numbers of peasants. Thus, cities and towns were one of the nobility's obvious targets. High, middle and, in some places, even low-ranking noblemen did their best to seize them from the royal domain, or at least deprive them of some of their territories and men, in order to control their political system. Although this was most often carried out through their clients, it was sometimes done with the direct and immediate participation of the nobles.

4. "some seizures and occupations and invasions of certain rural districts, villages, jurisdictions and common lands". AMC. LLAA. leg. 188, exp. 5, ff. 4r-v.

5. "powerful lord in this region". AMC. LLAA. leg. 187, exp. 3, ff. 58r-v. This is a specific reference to one of Cuenca's most dreaded nightmares during the first half of the 15th century, *don* Diego Hurtado Mendoza, Lord of Cañete and High Warden of the city and its municipal jurisdiction (this was a royal, not an urban, office).



In this respect, not many cities and towns in Castile enjoyed the dubious privilege of cities like Cuenca (the central object of this study).⁶ Between 1410 and 1480, Cuenca suffered intense and prolonged harassment, largely at the hands of a whole set of noble lineages (comprising members of the high, middle and even low-ranking nobility), which pressed and fought to gain total control of the city, or at the very least broad areas of power within the town and in its municipal jurisdiction. Some of the most prominent of these lineages were: the Acuña (Lords and later Counts of Buendía and Dukes of Huete), the Mendozas (Lords and, in due time, Marquises of Cañete), the Pachecos (Marquises of Villena), the de la Cerdas (Dukes of Medinaceli), the Carrillo de Mendozas (Counts of Priego), the Manriques (Counts of Paredes), the Carrillo de Albornoz (Lords of Torralba and other places), and those of members of the peripheral royal family, such as *don* Enrique de Villena, a bastard grandson of Henry II. Even ambitious members of the low nobility tried to profit from the protection granted by their noble lords,⁷ a path also taken by

6. Regarding the city of Cuenca and its evolution in the 15th century, see: Guerrero, Yolanda; Sánchez, José María. *Cuenca en la Baja Edad Media: Un sistema de poder*. Cuenca: Diputación de Cuenca, 1994. See also the works by: Quintanilla, María Concepción. "Marcos y formas de proyección de la nobleza conculse en su entorno urbano y territorial", *El Tratado de Tordesillas y su época, Congreso Internacional de Historia*. Madrid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1995: I, 131-154 (3 vols.); Quintanilla, María Concepción. "La implantación de la nobleza y relaciones de poder en la tierra de Cuenca en la Baja Edad Media", *Relaciones de poder en Castilla: el ejemplo de Cuenca*, Joaquín Saúl García, Ángel Luis López, coords. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 1997: 103-132; Quintanilla, María Concepción. "Política ciudadana y jerarquización del poder. Bandos y parcialidades en Cuenca". *En la España Medieval*, 20 (1997): 219-250; Quintanilla, María Concepción. "Estructuras y relaciones de poder en la tierra de Cuenca a fines de la Edad Media", *La Península Ibérica en la Era de los Descubrimientos (1391-1492)*. Actas de las III Jornadas Hispano-Portuguesas de Historia Medieval (Sevilla, 25-30 de noviembre de 1991). Seville: Consejería de Cultura, 1997: I, 707-736 (2 vols.); Sánchez, José María. "Territorio y conflicto en el ámbito jurisdiccional de Cuenca (época de los Reyes Católicos)". *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Historia Medieval*, 9 (1996): 89-118; Jara, José Antonio. *Concejo, poder y élites. La clase dominante de Cuenca en el siglo XV*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2000; Jara, José Antonio. "The Importance of Being Earnest: Urban Elites and the Distribution of Power in Castilian Towns in the Late Middle Ages", *Building Legitimacy. Political Discourses and Forms of Legitimation in Medieval Societies*, Isabel Alfonso, Hugh Kennedy, Julio Escalona, eds. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2004: 139-175.

7. Among others, this was the case of *mosén* Diego de Varela who, during the second half of the 15th century, illegally tried to convert some of his rural possessions inside Cuenca's jurisdiction into closed meadows; this was the shortest (and least conflictual) route towards the segregation of these lands from the jurisdiction of the city (given they were previously transformed into *redondas* that is after their new legal status was recognized). Diego de Varela, like other members of the town's elites, formed in the ranks of noblemen rebelled against the king. It is not surprising that the city opposed him with extraordinary energy. AMC. LLA. leg. 196, exp. 2, ff. 107v-108r. On this type of segregation, see: Monsalvo, José María. "Paisaje agrario, régimen de aprovechamientos y cambio de propiedad en una aldea de la tierra de Ávila durante el siglo XV. La creación del término redondo de Zapardiel de Serrezuela". *Cuadernos abulenses*, 17 (1992): 11-110; Monsalvo, José María. "Usurpaciones de comunales. Conflicto social y disputa legal en Ávila y su tierra durante la Baja Edad Media". *Historia Agraria*, 24 (2001): 89-121; Clemente, Julián. "Valdetorres, de dehesa a aldea (1409-1510). Poblamiento, conflicto y poder en la tierra de Medellín". *Studia Historica. Historia Medieval*, 20-21 (2002-2003): 47-72; Jara, José Antonio. "'Que memoria de onbre non es en contrario'. Usurpación de tierras y manipulación del pasado en la Castilla urbana del siglo XV". *Studia Historica. Historia Medieval*, 20-21 (2002-2003): 73-104; Jara, José Antonio. "Facing the depredations and fighting the predators. Urban Castile and the defence of municipal jurisdiction in the Late Middle Ages". *Imago Temporis. Medium Aevum*, 1 (2007): 143-170.



these lords' vassals, who often succeeded in making their lords put pressure on the city on their behalf, as in the case of Rodrigo Manrique, Marshall of Castile, who, on 20th May 1467, complained that Cuenca city council had forbidden his vassals to collect firewood within its jurisdiction. He alleged that this went against common use and threatened the city with appropriate reprisals: *Creed que avnque esto lexos, que para tomar [¿enmienda?] destas cosas e non las consentyr, sy mucho me aquexays, me fallaredes çerca, pero sy vosotros quisiéredes, non será nada menester sinon que biuamos en pas, e yo asy lo quiero*.⁸

During practically the whole century, this sword of Damocles hung constantly over the city and its municipal jurisdiction. From time to time its thread would be broken, resulting in the logical consequences:

E sy otra cosa vos plasera faser, yo me descargo por la presente, quel danno que yo en esto podre resçibir, sera bien poco y [...] el de vosotros y de vuestras comarcas sera general, que vos çertifico que cosa en la tierra y en sus comarcas non quede que se non ponga a fuego. Ya sabes que de pequenna çentella se leuanta grand fuego, y de esto non deveys vosotros ser el comienço.⁹

If, in other cities and towns, this strenuous pressure led to the definitive loss of land and men, their conversion into lordships or settlement within them of potent noble lineages endowed with great political power, this was not exactly how the process was concluded in the case of Cuenca. My argument is that it is precisely in this almost endemic pressure exerted on Cuenca by the nobility that the strength, fortitude, and the character displayed by the city in its defence lies. In fact, the presence of diverse and conflictual noble interests implied relief from some of the harshest effects of the pressure exerted on the city. All these constrictions led the citizens of Cuenca —particularly its elites— to adopt a communal/collective line of action to face a conflict in which they had to fight for all that they cherished, especially their freedom. It was therefore, in the context of this agonistic fight that Cuenca devised the main lines of its communal political identity. This was generally fully respected (the few fissures inside the elites being minor ones), at least until the 1480s when, once the kingdom had been pacified by Elizabeth I and pressure exerted by the nobility reduced to a reasonable dimension, this great political identity pact began to crack, thus making evident the important role played in the process by the presence of a plurality of enemies.

8. "Although I am a long way from you, if I must [emend?] these things and oppose them, if you force me, you will find me near you, but if you wish, we will live in peace". AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 1, f. 46v.

9. "And if any other thing pleases you, I hereby declare myself not responsible for it, and the damage that I could receive from you will be negligible and [...] yours and that of your jurisdiction will be general for I assure you that there will be nothing in those lands that won't be put to fire. You know that small sparks ignite big fires, and of this you must not be the initiators". AMC. LLAA. leg. 201, exp. 1, ff. 53r-54r. This was how *don* Juan López Pacheco, Marquis of Villena, addressed the city of Cuenca on 21st May 1479. At the height of the Civil War, the Marquis demanded that the city renounce making war on his estates under the penalty of devastation of its jurisdiction.



2. The construction of an urban referent of political identity

[...] bien sabedes como yo sienpre fui justificado en mi bevir bien, e todos los míos, e agora non entiendo mudar otra costunbre sinon seguir el servicio del Rey, mi sennor, e el pro común de esta Çibdat, aunque pese a esos buenos de profetas.¹⁰

In the first third of the 15th century, the two most important lineages of the regional nobility, the Acuña and the Mendozas, were fighting for the conquest of the city.¹¹ It was in this context that, on 8th December 1417, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, in response to measures adopted by the town council, addressed the city to complain about the said measures and justify himself before the city. He asserted the irreproachability of his conduct on the basis of the justification of his 'living properly'. On a social plane, this implied scrupulous observation of the duties imposed on him by his state and condition and, on a political plane, it was identified with the service to king and city that he affirmed he had observed all his life. In just a few lines, the Lord of Cañete was able to synthesize the constituent elements of his political identity. Nevertheless, he had done something more. On the one hand, he had established his own political identity in positive terms; and on the other he had referred in negative terms to the city's political identity, firstly, by tacitly comparing 'those good prophets' to lunatics, considering the (political) madness with which the Mendoza reproached Cuenca's rulers, and secondly by denouncing their objection to his conduct, "even if those goods prophets strongly resent it". This way, Diego Hurtado was able to reproach them for not living properly or serving king and city (the opposite of what he declared himself to observe).

It was evident that Diego Hurtado had instrumentalised his discourse (such is the fate of discourses) in order to present a more favourable self-image in the context of a serious conflict. Years later, on 20th July 1423, facing the charge that his vassals of Poyatos and Uña had invaded the city's hill district, he reproduced a similar discursive scheme:

[...] bien tengo que ha grandes dias que sodes enformados e çertificados de my buena voluntad [...] E sus ofiçiales e algunos con no buena entençion nin guardando la preeminencia desa dicha çibdat e su tierra, desuiauan los negoçios por su mesmo interese e dexauan los negoçios dilatar [...] et gastan el dinero dela dicha çiudad.¹²

10. "[...] you know that I have always been justified in my living properly, as have all my relatives and followers, and I do not now intend to change my habits but to continue in the service of the King my Lord and of the common good of this city, even if those good prophets strongly resent it". AMC. LLAA. leg. 185, exp. 1, ff. 3r-v.

11. I have treated this conflict in: Jara, José Antonio. "Vecindad y parentesco. El lenguaje de las relaciones políticas en la Castilla urbana del siglo XV", *El contrato político en la Corona de Castilla. Cultura y sociedad políticas entre los siglos X al XVI*, François Foronda, Ana Isabel Carrasco, dirs. Madrid: Dykinson, 2008: 211-239.

12. "[...] you undoubtedly know my goodwill [...] And its officers [Cuenca's] and others not of good intention nor observing the pre-eminence of that aforesaid city and its municipal jurisdiction, have manipulated its affairs to their own benefit and delayed its businesses in order to profit from them [...] and squander the city's money". AMC. LLAA. leg. 187, exp. 2, ff. 22r-v.



This time, the identity referents were complemented, elaborated and explained. The 'goodwill' of the Mendoza was compared to the urban officers' absence of goodwill (bad will), and his unexpressed service to the city related to the fully described disservice of Cuenca's public officers.¹³

All political identity constructions are the product of a specific discourse, of the way that a whole set of identity referents are linked ('living properly', 'goodwill', 'service to the king' and 'service to the city').¹⁴ For the same reason, these constructions serve as a two-way street insofar as the political identity definition of 'self' demands a dialogue with the political identity construction of the 'other'.¹⁵ In this way, the elements enabling the definition of marks of identity with respect to inclusion (both individual and collective, since social actors tend to gather in groups) and exclusion reside in these self-categorizations. Diego Hurtado proved he had perfectly understood the norms ruling the specular game of identity; the city also learnt this lesson.

On 26th July 1420, as a result of the refusal of some of Diego Hurtado's vassals to pay the taxes charged on their lands (which they legally owned within the jurisdiction of the city), Cuenca complained to the Mendoza [...] *porque la Çibdat e su tierra non sean defraudados en su derecho, e con la vuestra merçed nin con vuestros vasallos non recresca contienda [...]*.¹⁶ On the one hand, the city was legitimising and giving warning of the means it could resort to in order to solve the dispute. On the other, it was holding the Lord of Cañete responsible for the faults of his vassals and their consequences. In this game of positive/negative political planes, the city was now assuming a ruling role. This role was expressed more

13. On 15th September 1464, Lope Vázquez de Acuña used a similar discursive argument to demand that Cuenca return goods seized by the city to mosén Diego de Valera and the *regidor* Alonso del Castillo (both citizens of Cuenca had been fined for being in the king's disservice). AMC. LLAA. leg. 196, exp. 2, ff. 107v-108r.

14. As Turgeon affirms, identity is a permanent work of construction and reconstruction of a community that is not only cultural but communicational (discursive). See: Turgeon, Laurier; Létourneau, Jocelyn; Fall, Khadiyatoulah, dirs. *Les espaces de l'identité*. Sainte-Foy-Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1997: IX.

15. Regarding the weight of individual-group and selfness-otherness relations to the process of definition of identity, see: Garman, Sebastian Philip. *Foundation myths and political identity: Ancient Rome and Anglo-Saxon England compared*. London: London School of Economics (PhD Dissertation), 1992 (especially 64-65); Turgeon, Laurier. "Le chaudron de cuivre. Parcours historique d'un objet interculturel", *Les espaces de l'identité*, Laurier Turgeon, Jocelyn Létourneau, Khadiyatoulah Fall, dirs. Sainte-Foy-Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1997: 239-259. See also: Tap, Pierre. "Introduction", *Identités collectives et changements sociaux. Production et affirmation de l'identité Colloque International*, Pierre Tap, dir. Toulouse: Privat, 1980: 11-15; Groshens, Marie-Claude. "Production d'identité et mémoire collective", *Identités collectives et changements sociaux. Production et affirmation de l'identité Colloque International*, Pierre Tap, dir. Toulouse: Privat, 1980: 149-151; Soulet, Marc-Henry. "Identité collective, résistance au changement et rapports de sociabilité dans les sociétés rurales", *Identités collectives et changements sociaux. Production et affirmation de l'identité Colloque International*, Pierre Tap, dir. Toulouse: Privat, 1980: 157-159; On the role played by groups located in ambiguous positions between self and others, see: Neumann, Iver B. "Collective Identity Formation: Self and Other in International Relations". *European Journal of International Relations*, 2 (1996): 139-174.

16. "[...] in order that the city and its municipal jurisdiction's rights be observed, and contest does not emerge with your honour nor with your vassals [...]". AMC. LLAA. leg. 109, exp. 1, ff. 1r-v.



confidently in March or April 1465 (the date of the document is incomplete) when Cuenca reproached Pedro de Peralta, Lord of La Puebla de Almenara, for giving shelter in his village to Juan de la Panda after he had assaulted the village of Valdeganga (in Cuenca's *sexmo* of Arcas) and had stolen, amongst many other things, forty cows. The city asked the Peralta for compensation in such a way that

*[...] conpliréys lo que la justiçia e rasón vos obligan [...] en otra manera, con rasón podremos seer de vos quexosos e desir que non queréys tener el debdo e amor que tener devéys e a cargo vuestro nos será forçado de proueer a nuestros vesinos con justiçia [...].*¹⁷

In this Bourdieuvian game of *refus refusant d'autres refus, des dépassements dépassant d'autres dépassements*,¹⁸ Cuenca transformed the complaints made by the nobility into complaints made against the nobility, using the very same identity referents used by noblemen in their process of self-categorization. Thus, the city's conduct (the possible reprisals it could exercise) was justified or legitimised by means of a game of coordinated categories of political identity. In the first place, Cuenca had to provide justice for its citizens (this obligation constituted one of the key elements upon which the process of construction of its identity was based); implementation of this obligation, in this case, derived from the conduct of the Lord of La Puebla, which was unjustified because praxis denied his stated referential identity (that of debt and love, or the moral obligation and deep fondness he felt towards the city). In the second place, the city found its justification in the parallel lack of justification of Pedro de Peralta, since the reproach brought about by his conduct over key elements in his identity simultaneously implied self-denunciation of the justice and reason (not) covering his actions. It is worth mentioning that the city, immersed in this game of qualification and disqualification of 'self' and 'other', did not deny the Peralta the identity referents of 'debt' and 'love' because this would have prevented Cuenca from elaborating its discursive argument. On the contrary, Cuenca recognized these referents in him, and used this recognition (positive plane) to denounce the Lord's conduct (negative plane) and, in this manner, it was able to establish the legitimacy of its own conduct (positive plane).

Rather than being a game of or for 'singles', identity was played by 'doubles'. Both city and noblemen needed each 'other' in order to build their own respective identities not only because all categorizations (self-categorizations) contained the defining elements of a 'self' and an 'other' but because the identity referents

17. "[...] you will observe what justice and reason demand from you, [...] otherwise, we could declare that we are dissatisfied with you, that you do not want to have the debt and love you should have, and we will be obliged to provide our citizens with justice [...]". AMC. LLAA. leg. 197, exp. 3, ff. 29v-30r.

18. "refusals refusing further refusals, overtakings overtaking further overtakings". Bourdieu, Pierre. *La distinction. Critique sociale du jugement*. Paris: Minuit, 1979: 61; see also: Bourdieu, Pierre. "Condition de classe et position de classe". *Archives Européennes de Sociologie/European Journal of Sociology*, 7/2 (1966): 201-223.



of 'self' and 'other' were forged and moulded in discourse and in everyday interactions between the diverse social actors.

3. The city: from the object of political relations to social actor

On 1st November 1417, in this context of conflict between the noble lineages of the Acuña and Mendozas, the city wrote to Diego Hurtado (as it had also done to Lope Vázquez) offering its services as mediator between the two parties: *Que esto lo faremos igual e justificadamente, syn vandería alguna, como cunple al seruiçio de nuestro sennor el rey e prouecho común desta çibdat, e guardaremos loas honrras de cada vno de uosotros [...]*.¹⁹

Mediation implies a positive act of interposition or intermediation founded on the (moral or physical, in the broad sense) superiority held by the mediator over the parties. It is this superiority that enables the mediator to introduce himself between the parties, separate them and judge their conduct. Moreover, it is this superiority that enables him to force the contending parties to accept his arbitral findings.

Having been transformed into a battlefield by the Acuña and Mendozas, and reified through its conversion by both parties into an object of desire and a reward for victory, Cuenca had reacted firmly by stating its own identity, as I have already shown. Its mediation constituted a further step in the process of political (and political identity) construction. By means of this instrument, the city was able to transform its original position as an object of the conflict into that of an active participant in the political relations woven into the region.²⁰ Although mediation constituted the central and most brilliant aspect of this process of de-reification, other instruments were also used: firstly, negotiation with other noble lords to win their support (and simultaneously separate them from a possible alliance with any of the other parties); secondly, the implementation of mechanisms of pressure over the parties (including military ones), similar to those exercised by the Acuña, the Mendozas and any other noble lineage.

With respect to the first question, Cuenca showed an extraordinary ability to attract to its side *don* Enrique de Aragón, who contributed a set of relatively fluid relationships, firstly, with one of the most important lineages in the region (despite its main branch being in decline), that of the Alborno (the Lord of Torralba through marriage to María de Alborno) and secondly, with the monarchy, since his condition as bastard grandson of Henry II made him a peripheral member of the

19. "We will do this justly and with justification, without partialities, as befits the service of our Lord the King and this city's public good, ever respecting your state and condition [...]". AMC. LLAA. leg. 185, exp. 2, ff. 8r-v, 10r.

20. On this particular point see: Jara, José Antonio. "Consciencia, alteridad, percepción y marcación: la construcción de la identidad de los sujetos en la Castilla urbana del siglo XV", *Construir la identidad en la Edad Media. Poder y memoria en la Castilla de los siglos VII a XV*, José Antonio Jara, Isabel Alfonso, Georges Martin, coords. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2010.



royal household. Moreover, the city also showed a great political waist formulating this alliance (which was never expressly formalised) by entrusting *don* Enrique with an inquiry into the causes and consequences of the conflict.²¹

This expedient afforded significant advantages to both parties. On the one hand, it placed *don* Enrique at the heart of the conflict (and problem), transforming him from spectator (quite possibly a worried one) into principal actor as the appointed judge of both noblemen (a similar process to the mediation by Cuenca). On the other hand, it represented the reaffirmation of Cuenca's political role. This way, the city showed it had the ability not only to win over a sector of the nobility but also to manipulate instruments of political intervention, such as the inquiry. Although the latter was not reserved to the monarch, it was fundamentally ordered by the king; and in this way the city assumed (even if ideally) some of the faculties reserved for the king, which led to it occupying a superior position in the frame of its relations with the nobility and specifically with the noblemen in conflict.

In fact, Cuenca had shown great skill in commissioning the inquiry to *don* Enrique... and *don* García Álvarez de Albornoz, High Warden of the city and its municipal jurisdiction, as well as to the four mayors (judges) of the town. The presence of the High Warden (although a relative of *don* Enrique's) and, above all, of the four mayors, anticipated the possibility of *don* Enrique (who was, after all, a nobleman) being tempted to transform the city into the object of the inquiry (once more reifying it together with the two noble parties), and accentuated the superior position the city claimed within the frame of the conflict by setting itself up as judge in this inquisitorial process.

In this manner, the city proceeded to occupy an important space in political (identity) representation, participation and construction: as judge of the inquiry, it had not been recognised by the parties, but the fact that it had achieved recognition from a sector of the nobility (albeit not directly involved in the dispute) is of some significance. This recognition by the de Aragón and his participation in the inquiry constituted mechanisms of levelling that, if not social, were at least political (affecting both Cuenca and *don* Enrique). Nevertheless, through a process of representation transfer, this levelling also extended to the city-Acuña-Mendoza relation, since the participation of *don* Enrique in the inquiry affected not only the 'non contextualized' condition of his 'self' but the many 'other' political spaces configuring that 'self', namely those found in the spheres of monarchy and nobility. As a nobleman who was able to fully represent his 'class colleagues', his political levelling with Cuenca involved 'city-nobility' political levelleving.²²

21. This was entrusted on 19th October 1417, practically at the beginning of the conflict, and was concluded two days later. AMC. LLAA. leg. 185, exp. 1, ff. 28r-29r. The report and the decisions adopted as a consequence (such as prohibition from entering the city enacted against both noblemen and their men) were sent to the contenders for their knowledge, generating a written chain of recriminations over the following months. AMC. LLAA. leg. 185, exp. 2, ff. 5r-7r, 8r-9v, 10v-11r, 25r-27r.

22. Regarding the ideological meaning of the notion of 'justice' and its use for identity purposes see: Bartram, Claire M. *The reading and writing practices of the Kentish gentry: the emergence of a Protestant identity in Elizabethan Kent*. Canterbury: University of Kent (PhD Dissertation), 2005: 84-115.



In all likelihood, it was this situation that drove the city to make a further move in this process of political identity construction. The inquiry decreed by the town, which was endowed with ample political recognition, thanks to the participation of *don Enrique*, was an important instrument of pressure on the contending parties. Diego Hurtado and Lope Vázquez could not permit its enforcement as they had no way of intervening in it, because, as parties to the inquiry, they had been reified in the same way they had reified Cuenca at the beginning of the conflict. For this reason, mediation (arbitration) offered the most elegant, if only temporary, solution to the conflict: Cuenca, which would have had difficulty imposing strict observation of the inquiry, gained the recognition of its political role and its condition as actor of political relations on the same plane as the noblemen. The latter, who were unable to continue their plans for domination, avoided the (relatively) harmful consequences of the inquiry (while this may have been on a theoretical plane at that moment, it could be activated at any time by circumstances, such as support from the king and/or other noblemen).²³

The intervention of the king and other noblemen,²⁴ the inquiry and the eventual ‘imposition’ of arbitration constituted levels of action that, once reached, opened the way to the next level. Nevertheless, consecution of these stages should not be understood as a linear progression but as a cumulative process of political decision/construction. Both city and noblemen tended to make simultaneous use of all the instruments of political action they had available at any given moment; the consolidation of each of these levels simply facilitated the transfer of more pressure to the next level of political action. Thus, on October 1417 the city announced (timidly) its intention of resorting to any measure it had at its disposal to pacify the contenders (a vague way of announcing its intention to resort to violent means). On 1st November, once the inquiry had finished, Cuenca, counting on the tacit assent of Lope Vázquez, which made it more confident of its political weight, threatened Diego Hurtado with the imposition of economic sanctions if the conflict was not solved by Epiphany. Only five days later, it ordered guards to be placed at the city gates to prohibit the noblemen and their followers from entering the town (thus enforcing the royal prohibition). These measures were strictly enforced and not a single esquire serving the Mendozas or the Acuña was allowed to enter the city, not even to visit their wives.²⁵

23. On the combination of judicial and arbitral strategies, see: Hudson, John. “La interpretación de disputas y resoluciones: el caso inglés, c. 1066-1135”. *Hispania*, 197 (1997): 885-916.

24. At the beginning of September 1417, John II (already in his minority) had ordered both noblemen to leave the city and imposed a truce between them for two months; on 5th November he extended the truce until the 31st of January of 1418 and on 8th July 1418 he confirmed both the exile and the truce, extending it for another four months. AMC. LLAA. leg. 185, exp. 1, ff. 7v-8v, 16r-v; leg. 185, exp. 2, ff. 21r-v; leg. 185, exp. 3, ff. 17r-18r.

25. AMC. LLAA. leg. 185, exp. 1, ff. 2r; leg. 185, exp. 2, ff. 8r-v, 10r, 15v-16r, 23v-24r, 25r-26v. On August 1418 Lope Vázquez and his followers were admitted to the city (by that time the Lord of Buendía had apparently renounced his aspirations for domination); Cuenca then acted as a protective wall for them by preventing their confrontation with the militia raised by Diego Hurtado, who were camped on



The solution of the conflict benefited both Cuenca and Diego Hurtado. The city remained inside the royal domain and the Lord of Cañete was able to make his influence felt within it by procuring for himself the royal office of High Warden of Cuenca.

One of the discursive arguments used in the inquiry and in the arbitral mediation was that resolution of the conflict and the pacification of the contenders (and of the city that suffered their aggressions) were in the service of the king [...] *e pro de la dicha çibdat e de los que en ella biuen*.²⁶ This way, a distinction came into operation between the superior political abstraction 'city' and the social body of its inhabitants (citizens and residents). This distinction implied the construction of the city as a subject of law, independent of each of its constituents. The juridical abstraction 'Cuenca' emerged as something more than the sum of the individual subjects of law integrating its social body; it transcended individual and collective political identity constructions and their 'class barriers' allowing a project of political community to be built (this was much more idealistic than material, as it was subjected to instrumentalisation by the ruling elites, but it was by no means less real).²⁷ Although this was a generally shared feature by Castilian and European towns, it nevertheless constituted a permanent concern for the city throughout the century. The correct perception of urban reality, its recognition or rejection, implied, at least on an ideological level, an imbalance in the social and power position that the city occupied in the political frame (which was fundamentally regional) in which it normally acted; and although this recognition/rejection operated intellectually on an ideological plane, it also had consequences at a material level.

When the city of Cuenca addressed Lope de Alarcón, on 13th March 1436, to complain about the misdeeds committed by his vassals within its jurisdiction, it used the heading clause of the letter to (ideologically) create an imbalance in their respective positions of power: *Lope de Alarcón. El conçejo, caualleros, escuderos, regidores, alcaldes, alguasil, ofiçiales e omes buenos dela noble çibdat de Cuenca vos enbiamos mucho saludar*.²⁸ The city made use of its most complete title formula, firstly, by

the outskirts of the city, near the House of Saint James (the Lord of Cañete had assembled an important contingent of horsemen, lancers and bowmen). AMC. LLAA. leg. 185, exp. 3, ff. 13r-15r.

26. "[...] and to the common good of the aforesaid city and of its inhabitants". AMC. LLAA. leg. 185, exp. 2, ff. 10v-11r.

27. This distinction operates similar mechanisms, although naturally on a very different scale, to those that were masterfully analysed by Ernst Kantorowicz in his work devoted to *The King's Two Bodies* (Kantorowicz, Ernst. *The King's Two Bodies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). On this point, with regard to the applicability of this model in the frame of the Crown of Castile (although circumscribed to the role played by 'Crown' and kings), see: Nieto, José Manuel. "Corona e identidad política en Castilla", *Construir la identidad en la Edad Media. Poder y memoria en la Castilla de los siglos VII a XV*, José Antonio Jara, Isabel Alfonso, Georges Martin, coords. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2010: 183-207; Jara, José Antonio. "Vecindad y parentesco...": 211-239; Jara, José Antonio. "Commo cunple a seruiço de su rey e sennor natural e al procomún de la su tierra e de los vesinos e moradores de ella. La noción de "servicio público" como seña de identidad política comunitaria en la Castilla urbana del siglo XV". December 2007, *e-Spania*, 4. 27 June 2014 <<http://e-spania.revues.org/document1223.html>>.

28. "Lope de Alarcón. The city council, knights, esquires, regidores, mayors, bailiff, officers and proud/hommes of the noble city of Cuenca greet you". AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 3, f. 62v. On the



enumerating its levels of political representation or participation: the social body (organized in its stamental groups: knights, esquires and proud'hommes) and the political body (composed of its public officers, from *regidores*, who were the highest officers in town, to the humblest representative of the commons of the city and its jurisdiction); and secondly, by reproducing its statutory condition (defined by the conditions of 'city' and 'noble'). Regarding Lope de Alarcón, the city denied him recognition of each and every one of the political identity categories that suited him: he was refused recognition of his titles of *don* and Lord and much less that of nobleman.²⁹

In this manner, the city manipulated perception (its 'self-and-other-perception') in order to produce, on the one hand, an unbalanced frame of political relations (to its own benefit) and, on the other hand, a space of communal political construction.³⁰

The leitmotiv of this process would focus on the notion of 'union', as expressed in an ordinance decreed by the city on 28th November 1468: *Consyderando que la vnión de muchos en amor e en caridad es madre de concordia, por la qual las cosas son alimentadas e creçen, e por la discordia son alejadas e amenguadas, e las çibdades destruydas [...]*.³¹

On 5th July 1468 prince Alphonse of Trastámara, half brother of Henry IV and pretender to the throne, died, which effectively put an end to the Civil War that had been devastating Castile since June 1465 (although there was a need for the king to negotiate the recovery of a certain *status quo* with the rebel nobles). The still recent experience of the Civil War (which had also affected the city, especially in 1465) and a future that looked far from promising made it advisable to take the path of union of action:

*[...] prometemos los oviar [los ruidos] nin faremos ayuntamiento de gentes en nuestras casas nin fuera dellas [...] e prometemos de trabajar con todas nuestras fuerças e de nuestros parientes e amigos e allegados para faser pas e meter sosiego en la dicha çibdad e entre los vesinos della [...] e prometemos de dar fauor e ayuda ala justiçia.*³²

manipulation of these institutions, see my work: Jara, José Antonio. "Vecindad y parentesco...": 211-239.

29. Unlike what had been observed in other circumstances, such as on 8th July 1465, when Cuenca addressed a letter to his *Especiales parientes e buenos amigos* ("Special relatives and good friends") of the city of Moya. AMC. LLAA. leg. 197, exp. 4, f. 59v. Or on 20th March and 12th April 1469, when writing to Pero Carrillo de Albornoz (Lord of Torralba) and Lope Vázquez de Acuña (Lord of Buendía), it recognised the title *Noble senor* ("Noble lord") for both of them. AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 3, ff. 24v, 30v.

30. Regarding the mechanisms and operativity of political relations in a context of balanced/unbalanced power, see: Sheehan, Michael. *The Balance of Power. History and Theory*. London-New York: Routledge, 1996.

31. "Considering that the union of many people in love and charity is the mother of concord, from which things are nurtured and grow, and that from discord things are divided and reduced, and the cities are destroyed [...]". AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 2, ff. 58v-60r.

32. "[...] we promise to obviate them [quarrels] and not call people in our houses or outside of them [...] [in our favour] and we promise to work with all our strength and that of our relatives and friends and followers in order to impose peace and peacefulness in the aforesaid city [...] and we promise to favour and help justice". AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 2, ff. 58v-60r.



Violence, social unrest and disorder, and revolt —the hydra of destruction of the political body— were to be sought out (identified) and banished from the city. This document, composed of eight chapters and a foreword, exposed the grave questions affecting the natural development of the city, in synthesis: the division of the supreme political body, the kingdom (they declared themselves in favour of King Henry IV); the division of the urban political body (any interference with the decision-making process was banned, the process being open only to the officers entrusted with such obligations); and the division of the urban social body (any partiality or disorder was prohibited).

The most important feature of these chapters lies in the fact that they had been promoted by the whole socio-political body: citizens who were both privileged (*hidalgos*, knights and esquires) and non-privileged (commoners) joined together in a project aspiring to preserve the political identity construction of which they formed part and which gave them a strong sense of collectivity.³³ The supreme expression of the union they were trying to secure lay in the ceremony that followed the public reading of the ordinances. These were read in Cuenca's main square, the Plaza de la Picota, and then sworn in. This was done first by the Church (Pedro de Santacruz, secretary to the Bishop Lope de Barrientos, testified that they had previously been sworn in by a representation of members of the cathedral chapter); then the oath was taken by sixteen citizens representing the city.³⁴

In fact, this kind of oath of service to the city (and the king) represented the most elaborate image of this project:

*[...] ellos, todos concordes e a vna voluntad, sin premia e sin indusimiento, sobre la sennal de la crus con sus propias manos derechas dellos e de cada vno dellos tanida, e a las palabras delos santos euangelios [...] e luego todos o la mayor parte, a vna voz, dixeron que aprouaban, jurauan e juraron [...].*³⁵

The solemnity of the ceremony (despite its simplicity), the physical presence of the citizens gathered in the same space, the public expression of the content of the oath, and the social, but above all religious, sanction of the oath itself, transformed this social aggregation into a vertebrate political entity, a community.

33. While it is true that some citizens of Cuenca, among them some distinguished members of the ruling class, were serving their lords outside the city in the party rebelling against the king, the great majority of the social structure remained loyal to the city and the monarch.

34. On the influence of the mechanisms of leadership and, by extension, of representation in the conformation of collective identity models, see: Postmes, Tom; Baray, Gamze; Haslam, S. Alexander; Morton, Thomas A.; Swaab, Roderick I. "The dynamics of personal and social identity", *Individuality and the group: advances in social identity*, Tom Postmes, Jolanda Jetten, eds. London: SAGE, 2006: 215-236.

35. "[...] all agreeing and with one will, not being forced nor induced, over the sign of the Cross with their right hands over the words of the Holy Gospels [...] and afterwards they all or the majority of them, with one voice, said that they approved it, would swear it, and effectively swore it [...]" AMC. LLAA. leg. 191, exp. 5, ff. 22r-24r.



Table I. Public oaths taken in Cuenca

Date	Oath taken	People taking the oath
23 June 1436	On the king's instructions	55
11 February 1447	On the bishop's instructions	61
December 1447/January 1448*	On the city and its jurisdiction's initiative	13
19 January 1448	On the city's initiative	7
21 January 1448	On the bishop and city's initiative	186
18 & 28 December 1450	On the city's initiative	5
16 December 1453 & 4 January 1454	On the city's initiative	13
21 September 1464	On the king's instructions	473**
28 November 1468	On the bishop and the city's initiative	25
26 February 1469	On the city's initiative	9
[day unknown] May 1469	On royal officers' initiative	30***
21 June 1469	On the king's instructions	15

* DURING THESE MONTHS, CITIZENS OF CUENCA'S VILLAGE OF VALERA DE SUSO CAME TO THE CITY COUNCIL TO GIVE THEIR OATH; IT IS PROBABLE THAT SIMILAR OATHS WERE TAKEN FROM THE OTHER VILLAGERS OF THE MUNICIPAL JURISDICTION BUT, IF THIS OCCURRED, THEIR OATHS HAVE DISAPPEARED FROM OUR SOURCES.

** AMONG THEM, 17 ECCLESIASTICS. LAYMEN REPRESENTED 60.8% OF ALL URBAN HOUSEHOLDS.

*** THE SAME OATH WAS TAKEN IN EVERY *CUADRILLA* (WARD) OF THE CITY FROM ALL THE CITIZENS.

SOURCES: AMC, LLAA, LEG. 189, EXP. 1, FF. 11R, 21V-22V; LEG. 191, EXP. 1, F. 9V; LEG. 191, EXP. 5, FF. 14V-15R, 19R, 22R-24R; LEG. 191, EXP. 7, F. 1R; LEG. 192, EXP. 1, FF. 42V-43R; LEG. 192, EXP. 4, FF. 69R-V, 93R; LEG. 196, EXP. 2, FF. 109V-112V; LEG. 198, EXP. 3, FF. 13R, 48V-49R, 55R, 55V-56R.

It is not surprising that during the 15th century the city council frequently resorted to this liturgy of the political body, in which the social body celebrated its union of action and communitarian identity.³⁶ Although on most occasions these oaths adopted the nature of political representation (they were taken by representatives

36. On identitarian constructions based on these kinds of discursive artefacts see: Sapir, Edward. "L'influence des modèles inconscients sur le comportement social", *The Unconscious: A Symposium*, ed. Ethel S. Dummer. New York: Knopf, 1927: 35-48; Holland, Dorothy; Lachicotte Jr., William; Skinner, Debra; Cain, Carole. *Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 1998: 26.



of the diverse layers of the socio-political pyramid of the city and its jurisdiction), it is also true that in particularly grave circumstances the participation of all citizens was demanded. In this way, the urban authorities emphasized the sense of union of the political community, as seen from the outside and particularly from within, because there was also a need for the community to believe in itself -and could a better expression of will be found than in the same cry coming from hundreds of mouths? This happened in 1448, when the city was facing the army of the *infantes* of Aragón (the sons of Ferdinand I of Aragón, who was uncle to John II of Castile) and certain local noblemen allied with them, such as Diego Hurtado de Mendoza (who took control of the city's castle); in 1464 and 1465, in the face of a new noble rebellion and the deposition-in-effigy of Henry IV; and in 1469, during a moment of respite between civil wars, when the next outbreak of hostilities was so vividly felt.

4. Arguing and fighting for identity: the defence of the royal domain

What were the political-constitutional fundamentals of this call for union? On 20th March 1469 Pero Carrillo de Albornoz, Lord of Torralba, sent a letter to Cuenca complaining that the city treated his vassals as if they were constantly [...] *en deservyçio del rey nuestro sennor e en danno desa çibdad tocasse, non myrando la naturalesa mas antigua que de my e vesindad e amor e debdo que yo tengo e en my se ha fallado [...]*.³⁷ The Lord of Torralba legitimised his conduct by resorting to a chain of referents of political identity that had already been tested and consolidated in the city-nobility interaction since the beginning of the century: service/disservice to king and city, nature and vicinity, love and debt (moral debt).³⁸ The allegation made by Pero Carrillo came as a consequence of the defensive measures adopted by Cuenca against him and his vassals (Pero Carrillo took advantage of each episode of civil war in order to occupy districts in Cuenca's jurisdiction). On the same day that the Lord of Torralba justified his conduct, the city took another oath from its recently appointed Member of Parliament, Honorato de Mendoza, son of the High Warden Juan Hurtado de Mendoza. The first three chapters he had to swear illustrate the issues that were of great concern to the city: first, an oath to serve the king; second, an oath to serve and honour the bishop (the most committed royal, and ecclesiastical, protector of the city), the city, its jurisdiction and its *regidores*; and third, an oath to oppose any attempt to segregate Cuenca, its jurisdiction, its vassals and its fortresses from the royal domain.³⁹

It was in the service to the king and the city where these political-constitutional fundamentals of the urban community were found. The distinctive mark of its

37. "[...] in disservice to the King our Lord, and detrimental to this city [...] disregarding my [Pero Carrillo's] nature and vicinity and the love and debt I feel for it [...]" . AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 3, f. 24r.

38. I have studied these questions in: Jara, José Antonio. "Vecindad y parentesco...": 211-239; Jara, José Antonio. "Commo cunple a seruio de su rey...".

39. AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 3, ff. 22r-v.



identity was the condition of the city pertaining to the royal domain, and it was the defence of this condition that called for union of action.⁴⁰

4.1 Arguing and dialoguing with the king

The gravest threat hanging over Castilian towns in the 15th century was the loss from municipal jurisdiction of places, districts and vassals. These were obliged to defend the integrity of their jurisdictions not only from the hunger of the neighbouring nobility but even from that of their own elites (who also tried to build their own jurisdictions at the city's expense) and from an ever weak monarchy eager to buy loyalties (which were unreliable when not openly treacherous) in exchange for urban rural districts segregated from the royal domain. In some cases whole cities and towns were handed over.⁴¹

In this manner, cities not only had to face pressure from the nobility but also from a monarchy that needed to be convinced of its strength (or deluded about its weakness) if it was to be regained as protector of the royal domain and defender of urban freedom. It was not until the reign of Elizabeth I that straightforward and effective backing from the monarchy could be relied on. Until then, cities like Cuenca were forced from time to time to remind the kings of their duties:

40. This defence was constantly demanded by the city during the century, as proved by the numerous petitions submitted by Members of Parliament (MPs) to the Crown in parliamentary sessions: Parliaments held in Madrigal in 1419 (petition 17); Valladolid 1420 (petition 6), Palenzuela 1425 (petition 32), Zamora 1432 (petition 12 and 45), Madrid 1433 (petition 9), Madrid 1435 (petition 15 and 28), Toledo 1436 (petition 25), Madrigal 1438 (petition 22 and 54), Valladolid 1442 (petition 1), Valladolid 1451 (petition 25 and 28), Burgos 1453 (petition 26 and 28), Córdoba 1455 (petition 5), Salamanca 1465 (petition 15 and 18), Ocaña 1469 (petition 4), Madrigal 1476 (petition 8), and Toledo 1480 (most of the articles set out the procedures established by the Queen and King for reintegrating to the cities and towns the lands, men and villages seized illegally by the nobility). See: *Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y de Castilla*. Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1882: III-IV.

41. This occurred in 1465, with the bestowal of Astorga to Álvaro Pérez Osorio, Count of Trastámara, conferring on him the title of Marquis. Between 1374 and 1398 Benavente had been the object of a number of handovers, the last of these in favour of Juan Alfonso Pimentel. Something similar happened in Trujillo from 1430 to the final triumph of Elizabeth I and Ferdinand V of Castile (the 'Catholic Kings'), and in Cuéllar from its bestowal to *don* Fernando de Antequera, in 1390. Between the end of this century and the beginning of the 16th century, land extension in the jurisdiction of Cáceres was minimal as a result of occupations by the nobility; a similar situation was suffered earlier by the city of Valladolid, in the last quarter of the 14th century. See: Martín, José A. *El concejo de Astorga. Siglos XIII-XVI*. Leon: Diputación de León-Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1987: 229; Hernández, Severiano. *El concejo de Benavente en el siglo XV*. Zamora: Instituto de Estudios Zamoranos-Diputación de Zamora, 1986: 67; Fernández-Daza, Carmen. "Linajes trujillanos y cargos concejiles en el siglo XV". *En la España Medieval*, 6 (1985): 419-432; Fernández-Daza, Carmen. "Linajes trujillanos y cargos concejiles en el siglo XV". *La ciudad hispánica durante los siglos XIII al XVI. Actas del coloquio (Rábida/ Sevilla, 14-19 septiembre de 1981)*, Emilio Sáez, Cristina Segura, Margarita Cantera, eds. Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 1985: I, 419-432; Velasco, Balbino. *Historia de Cuéllar*. Segovia: Diputación de Segovia, 1981: 111-126, 289-290; Santana, Fermina. *La villa de Cáceres en la Baja Edad Media*. Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid (PhD Dissertation), 1985: 51; Rucquoi, Adeline. *Valladolid en la Edad Media, II. El mundo abreviado (1367-1474)*. Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1987: 119-129.



[...] sy ala dicha çibdat fuesen quitados e apartados dellas los lugares de su tierra e término e enajenados a otro sennorío, por lo qual sería causa de ser despoblar e destruyr la dicha çibdat, de que se seguiría a vuestra senoría muy grand deservuiçio [...] por manera que esto no pase, en lo qual faredes lo que cunple a vuestro seruuiçio e acreçentamiento desa vuestra corona e a prouecho desta vuestra çibdat, e a los moradores della faredes mucho bien e mucha merçed [...].⁴²

On 30th May 1440, while John II was considering bestowing 400 vassals from Cuenca to Pedro de Acuña, he was addressed by the city, which made known its opposition to their handover to the nobleman. To this end, it resorted to an argument centering on two elements that were fundamental for the Crown: firstly, the survival of the city, which was key to the survival of the royal domain; and secondly, the service to the king, which implied service to the royal (physical) person (John II) and at the same time to the juridical person (the Crown): disservice to these would entail the destruction of the city. In this case, Cuenca reproached the king for failing to fulfil his duties as a monarch, something that affected negatively his obligations towards the political body of the kingdom (and consequently towards Cuenca) and towards his incorporated abstraction (the Crown). On March 1465, confronted with a new —and more dangerous— bestowal of vassals from the city, the town council produced a similar discourse, reproducing the notions of service (loyalty of the city towards the king) and disservice (which the monarch would incur as soon as he failed to defend the royal domain).⁴³

Their complaint did not guarantee the integrity of the jurisdiction (John II and Henry IV transferred several places in Cuenca's jurisdiction to the nobility) but enabled the city to elaborate a discourse around loyalty and disloyalty, using the notions of 'service' and 'disservice' as the pointer of these scales. Undoubtedly, legitimacy resided in the city, the real servant of king and Crown. In due course, the benefits from these services also went to the city. Henry IV granted the city the titles of 'noble' and 'loyal' (fundamental referents for the symbolic representation of the town and its position in the Castilian urban frame). Moreover, the king granted fiscal exemption from *pedido* and *monedas* to the citizens living inside the city's walls and to all those who could prove they had been at his service in past conflicts (some of them were even granted *maravedises de juro*); finally he granted Cuenca a tax-free market day every week.⁴⁴

42. "[...] if the aforesaid city were deprived of the villages under its jurisdiction and sold to other lords, it would cause the city to become depopulated and destroyed, and it would incur in grave disservice to your Highness [...] in order that this cannot happen, and you will fulfil your service and benefit the Crown and will benefit this your city, and you will do much good to its inhabitants [...]". AMC. LLAA. leg. 190, exp. 2, ff. 9v-10r.

43. AMC. LLAA. leg. 197, exp. 1, ff. 15r-v.

44. Bonachía, Juan Antonio. "Mas honrada que ciudad de mis reinos...". La nobleza y el honor en el imaginario urbano (Burgos en la Baja Edad Media)", *La ciudad medieval. Aspectos de la vida urbana en la Castilla bajomedieval*, Juan Antonio Bonachía, coord. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1996: 169-212. *Pedido* and *monedas*, together with the *alcabalas* constituted the bulk of royal taxes and finances. Whereas the latter was a charge on economic exchanges, the first were granted by Parliament at the



4.2 *Negotiating identity, negotiating the jurisdiction: city, noblemen and the royal domain*

One of the key elements in the survival of Cuenca in the first third of the century was the division inside the nobility and its relatively intense ‘manipulation’ by the city. In the second half of the century, Cuenca again had recourse to its relations with the nobility with the aim of defending its jurisdiction. A prerequisite to this dialogue with the nobility was the construction of the guiding principles of ‘loyalty’ and ‘service’ (and their counterparts, ‘disloyalty’ and ‘disservice’) to rule, on the one hand, the relations with the nobility that were in the course of being established; and, on the other, to legitimise the establishment of those relations in a context of so much rebellion and treachery. As early as 1440, the city council had addressed some members of the court to seek their cooperation against the bestowal of the 400 vassals to Pedro de Acuña. However, it was in the 1460s when it intensified its search for help from members of the high nobility and other important members of the regional nobility: the Bishop of Cuenca, the Master of the Order of Santiago, the Marquis of Santillana, the Bishop of Sigüenza, the Archbishop of Seville, the Steward Andrés de Cabrera (subsequently Marquis of Moya), or Juan de Oviedo, Secretary to Enrique IV.⁴⁵

As Pero Carrillo de Albornoz pointed out on 25th May 1467, in one of his periods of cooperation with the city, the discursive thread underlying these political relations lay in his disposition to serve:

*[...] asy está yo muy presto para faser muy enteramente lo que querréis ordenar y mandar, asy por aver segido e seruido tan sennaladamente al rey nuestro sennor [...] Y todo lo que será justo, es muy grand rasón que yo faga con vosotros sennores [...].*⁴⁶

Or, as synthetically proposed on January 1469 by the Duke of Medinaceli, [...] *porque mi deseo e voluntad siempre fue de mirar e guardar vuestras cosas no menos que las propias [...]*⁴⁷ (this did not, however, prevent him from occupying a good portion of Cuenca’s northern *sexmo* of the Sierra).

king’s request (the total amount afterwards being distributed amongst cities and towns and paid by their citizens/residents usually on a tax share basis). *Maravedises de juro* were public debt obligations granted by the king to an individual and paid from a specific tax charging a specific place. Evidently, this does not mean that these privileges were always observed; for example, in 1476, in the middle of the War of Succession, the ‘Catholic Kings’ charged the city *pedido* [and] *monedas*, forcing the town to claim for observation of its tax exemption. See: AMC. LLAA. leg. 197, exp. 4, ff. 57v-58r, 59r; leg. 198, exp. 2, f. 60r-v; leg. 200, exp. 1, ff. 44v-45v.

45. AMC. LLAA. leg. 190, exp. 2, f. 12r; leg. 197, exp. 1, f. 16r; leg. 197, exp. 2, f. 40v; leg. 198, exp. 2, ff. 21v-22v; leg. 198, exp. 3, f. 156r.

46. “[...] I am quite ready to fulfil what you wish to order and command me, not only because I have followed and served the King our Lord with distinction [...]. And it is reasonable that I behave with you in a just manner [...]”. AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 1, sf.

47. “[...] because my wish and will has always been to seek out and protect your interests as if they were mine [...]”. AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 2, f. 74v.



This notion, 'service', implies the assumption, at least on an intellectual plane, of the (political identity) elements serving as its referents. Pero Carrillo referred to these when citing 'justice' and 'reason'. On 7th January 1442, Cuenca gave a more complete battery of referents (expressed both positively and negatively) when it demanded of Gómez Carrillo, Lord of Priego, the liberation of its Members of Parliament which he had imprisoned:

*[...] a vuestro poder por fuerça e contra su voluntad; de lo qual somos marauyllados en vos mandar cometer e faser lo suso dicho contra el seguro que el dicho sennor rrey tiene dado a los dichos procuradores e en deservicio suyo e en grant menos preçio e injuria desta dicha cibdat e de los que en ella viven [...] e si por causa e rason de los sobre dicho, algunos escandalos se recreçieren, e muertes e feridas, e robos e males e dannos se recreçieren, que vos, el dicho Gomes Carrillo, con vuestros bienes, seades a todo ello tenido e obligado [...].*⁴⁸

These 'power' (in its negative context, excessive and unjust), 'force', 'will' (in negative sense, deprivation of this), 'disservice', 'disdain', or 'insult' could be used to categorize both this nobleman's conduct and the behaviour of any other noble 'seizer'. The gravity of disdain and disservice to king and city was the same in both cases. The force exercised over the city implied breaking the balance in the power relations that also formed the basis of the construction of the city's political identity.

For this reason, the imbalance generated by the aggression of the nobility could and had to be resolved by means of cooperation with other noblemen (as happened in the 1410s with *don* Enrique de Aragón). In most cases, these noble lineages were either just looking out for their own political interests, or else they were aware that their political weight in the region was threatened by other more aggressive noble lineages, a circumstance calling for precautions, which they took by pacting with the city. This is what Cuenca and Pero Carrillo de Albornoz did on 3rd March 1470, when they signed a pact agreeing to help each other against the aggressions of the Duke of Medinaceli. Scarcely fifteen days before that, on 21st February, the city, the High Warden Juan Hurtado de Mendoza and Lope Vázquez de Acuña had signed a similar pact for the same reasons.⁴⁹

In this manner, and for different reasons, the defence of Cuenca's jurisdiction became a fundamental part of the political and military efforts of noblemen and town, and a guiding principle of their political identities insofar as the justification of their conduct lay in service to king and city, of which one of the

48. "[...] under your power, by force and against their will; we are quite astonished to know you ordered it done against the safe-conduct granted by the king to the aforesaid Members of Parliament, and in disservice to the king and in disdain and insult to this aforesaid city and its inhabitants [...] and if as a consequence of it, outrages arouse, and deaths and wounds, and plunders and evils and damages arouse, you, the aforesaid Gomes Carrillo, will be fully responsible [...]". AMC. LLAA. leg. 190, exp. 6, ff. 20v-21r.

49. AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 3, ff. 160v-161r, 159r-v.



constituent elements was the notion of 'royal domain' (albeit sometimes only in an ideal sense, it is true).

To this end, Cuenca developed an intense political-military activity aimed at defending, in the first place, the city itself, and in the second place, the jurisdiction. Thus, ordinances regulating the services of sentinels, night patrols and guards in the city were continuously decreed and enforced; fortresses and churches in the jurisdiction were repaired (the massive walls of some churches effectively transformed them into small strongholds); and the militia was frequently called up for duty.⁵⁰

Whether it was being aided or betrayed by the nobility, in either case Cuenca showed an active commitment to the defence of its jurisdiction (there was a permanent wish to *resistyr çiertos males e robos e dannos que en la tierra de la dicha çibdad se fassen*),⁵¹ even in the most adverse circumstances. An example occurred in July 1483, when, fearing that the Duke of Medinaceli's vassals might occupy some of the city's meadows, the town council expressed its die-hard resolve to defend the jurisdiction against the Marquis' men: on 10th July the city asked Pero Carrillo de Albornoz for help, at the same time ordering its villages of Alcantud, Cañizares and Fuertescusa (in the vicinity of the Duchy of Medinaceli) to call their men to arms as soon as they were commanded by the city. On 14th July, it wrote to the Duke, complaining of the imminent invasion, and to the castellan of Beteta (a vassal of Pero Carrillo de Albornoz) asking him to keep his spies on the field. On 16th July, it asked Alonso de Castro, the judge of *mestas* [and] *cañadas* (his function was to judge disputes between individuals/towns and livestock farmers) to demand that the Duke cease his intention to invade the meadows because they were the subject of a pending dispute between the Council of the *Mesta* and the city of Cuenca before the court he presided over (any arguments, even the most preposterous, were welcome); nevertheless, conscious of the weakness of this latter argument, the city ordered its militia to prepare itself (under a penalty of 10.000 *maravedises* and banishment from the city and jurisdiction for a year), asking the castellan of Beteta to act accordingly, and informing him that they had the backing of Juan Hurtado de Mendoza who had also ordered his vassals at Poyatos to make preparations.⁵² This time round, the city knew how to stop the blow, even before it was struck.

50. AMC. LLAA. leg. 191, exp. 6, ff. 80v, 92v-93r; leg. 197, exp. 1, ff. 13r-v, 19r, 32v, 33v; leg. 197, exp. 2, f. 39r; leg. 197, exp. 3, ff. 2v-r, 4r-5v, 13r; leg. 197, exp. 4, ff. 54r-v; leg. 198, exp. 3, f. 140r, 163v-164r.

51. "to resist certain evils and plunders and damages done in the jurisdiction of the city". AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 3, f. 38r.

52. AMC. LLAA. leg. 200, exp. 3, ff. 58r-59v; leg. 201, exp. 2, f. 4r; AMC, LLAA, leg. 205, exp. 2, ff. 60v-61r, 66r, 66v-67r, 70r-72r.



5. Conclusions

*[...] fiso ala dicha çibdad e a toda su tierra, distrieto e jurisdidiçión della, ynalianable e imprescriptible, anexándola ala corona rreal de sus rregnos para siempre jamás, e prometió e juró por su fe rreal de non dar nin enajenar la dicha çibdad nin cosa alguna de su término e tierra e jurisdición [...].*⁵³

In the 15th century, the inalienability and imprescriptibility of the royal domain constituted one of the most important discursive elements of the relation monarchy-cities. The weakness shown by John II and Henry IV under pressure from an ample (and changing) group of noblemen, and the extraordinary and permanent aggressiveness of the latter, transformed the defence of the royal domain into a referent for the survival of many towns. In this context, the nature of the relation of royal cities and towns with their 'natural' lord, the king, was both solidary and contesting. This apparent contradiction comes from the monarchy's failure to fulfil its obligations to the kingdom and the Crown and from the superior loyalty the latter demanded from their 'naturals'. Thus in 1465, in one of the most critical moments of the Civil War, when the city feared being deprived of most of its jurisdiction, Cuenca felt (physically and ideologically) strong enough to challenge the king: either Henry IV fulfilled his duties towards Cuenca or the city would surrender to the prince *don* Alphonse, or to any other nobleman who could guarantee its jurisdictional integrity within the royal Crown.⁵⁴ Once more, legitimacy resided in the city.

While subjected to these aggressions from the nobility, during the period under consideration, Cuenca learnt how elaborate a 'discourse of the royal domain', transformed into a mark of identity of its political action. The emphasis put on the notion of 'service' (to king and city) and on the different identity referents examined in this study, outlined the political, ideological and discursive fundamentals 'identifying' the city and 'distinguishing' it from the other noble actors. Thanks to this, the city could join the frame of 'national' and regional political relations, assuming a political role similar to the one played by the nobility, emphasizing (at least on an ideal or symbolic plane) the power position thus occupied within the frame of these political relationships.

It is in this 'distinguishing process' that the fundamentals of the city's political identity can be found. This political distinction or significance was instrumentalised in order to produce a specific identity model, the aim being to ideologically separate/distinguish city and neighbouring (regional) noblemen. As a natural consequence of this process, the construction and implementation of this identity model worked towards unifying the socio-political body around a common objective and political action.

53. "[John II] made the city and its entire municipal jurisdiction inalienable and imprescriptible, annexing it to the royal Crown forever, and he promised and swore by his royal word not to bestow nor grant the aforesaid city nor any single part of its jurisdiction [...]" . AMC. LLAA. leg. 197, exp. 1, f. 15r-v.

54. AMC. LLAA. leg. 197, exp. 3, ff. 24r-v.



Throughout most of the century, at least in Cuenca these *esforçar e vnirnos los pueblos a vn querer e voluntad*⁵⁵ were a real and daily practice, both in the city and its jurisdiction. During this period, in Cuenca (unlike in many other Castilian towns), the participation of its elites in these illegal practices acquired minimal significance. The strenuous pressure exerted by the nobility over the city and its jurisdiction operated what in other cities was only glimpsed: a real communion of interests between the different social groups. The defence of the jurisdiction also became their *raison d'être* and mark of identity because exploitation of the jurisdiction's resources formed the basis of their aspirations to social promotion.⁵⁶

55. "efforts and union of people around a same wish and will". AMC. LLAA. leg. 198, exp. 3, f. 52r.

56. After sending this paper to *Imago Temporis*, three books have appeared that would have merited the attention of this work. I just can devote this late footnote to quote them: Monsalvo, José María, ed. *Sociedades urbanas y culturas políticas en la Baja Edad Media*. Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca; Jara, José Antonio, coord. *Ante su identidad. La ciudad hispánica en la Baja Edad Media*. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2013; Oliva, Hipólito Rafael; Challet, Vincent; Dumolyn, Jan; Carmona, María Antonia, coords. *La comunidad medieval como esfera pública*. Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2014.



URBAN IDENTITY IN CASTILE IN THE 15TH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

Identities in the urban world are mental constructs of varying degrees of complexity that are built on the structure of the social groups to which they refer. But urban identity was a complex system also constructed based upon responsibilities and efforts, which served to cultivate common work. In Castile the towns and cities had a high capacity for management and organisation from their creation. The common identity was represented by the oligarchic government and the cities only brought before the king rivalries among themselves. This lack of sovereign urban identity leads to the supposition that the ambitions were absorbed in the feelings of identity with the community of the kingdom and monarchy would reserve an unquestionable leading role for the cities.¹

KEYWORDS

Cities, Identity, Late Middle Ages, Castile, Politic.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Civitates, Identitas, Tardum Medium Aevum, Castella, Politica.

1. Introduction

Castilian cities in the Middle Ages were artificial, deliberate and conscious constructions implanted in the territories recovered from the Moors in the process that is known as the *Reconquista*, or Reconquest. From the moment cities were institutionalised as *concilium/i* or *concejos*, their continuity would be maintained by institutional power, tradition, authority and agreement, which, together with the other contractual arguments, gave force to a newly created political community. In these cities, forms of urban identity started to appear, together with representations, tales, values and beliefs that intermingled with rituals and imaginary forms (metaphors, symbols, myths).² But the basic question of this paper is: What need was there for a sense of identity in the urban society of Medieval Castile? When did it appear? What was its function? How did it evolve and transform?

If we start from the premise that identities in the urban world are mental constructs of varying degrees of complexity that are built on the structure of the social groups to which they refer, we would have to agree that if the city was not a homogenous social structure in the Middle Ages, neither was it easy at the outset for the city in its first centuries of life to have a singular urban identity.³ It is possible that the identities were conferred by groups of settlers and dwellers that formed part of the city in its beginnings.⁴ Soon, new identities would be added from the participation of families, workshops, trades, customers, religious brotherhoods, neighbourhoods and other various forms of coexistence and participation which gave the neighbours and inhabitants of an area a sense of belonging.

Common tasks were to lay the foundations of the identity models of the community.⁵ Thus, the undertaking of shared defence tasks would have enabled

1. This study includes some of the results obtained during the research project *La jerarquización urbana: villas y ciudades en Castilla (1400-1561)* (HAR2013-44014-P), led from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid by the author and funded by the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness of the Government of Spain. Used abbreviations: AHN, Archivo Histórico Nacional (Simancas); AMB, Archivo Municipal de Burgos; AMT, Archivo Municipal de Toledo.

2. Gilli, Patrick; Salvatori, Enrica. "Introduction. L'autonomie et l'identité de la ville une question sociale?", *Les identités urbaines au Moyen Âge. Regards urbaines au Moyen Âge. Regards sur les villes du Midi français. Actes du colloque de Montpellier (Montpellier, 8-9 décembre 2011)*, Patrick Gilli, Enrica Salvatori, eds. Turnhout: Brepols, 2014: 1-7; Jara, José Antonio. "Introducción. Identidad e identidades urbanas", *Ante su identidad. La ciudad hispánica en la Baja Edad Media*, José Antonio Jara, coord. Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2013: 11-25; Wunenburger, Jean-Jacques. *Imaginaires du politique*. Paris: Ellipses, 2001: 13-14; Val, María Isabel del. "La identidad urbana al final de la edad media". *Anales de Historia Medieval de la Europa Atlántica*, 1 (2006): 1-28.

3. Asenjo, María. "Arguments politiques et culture urbaine. Dans la controverse entre Tolède et Grenade après 1492". *Histoire Urbaine*, 35 (2012): 107-130.

4. Attreed, Lorraine Christine. "Urban Identity in Medieval English Towns". *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 32/4 (2002): 571-592; Boucheron, Patrick; Menjot, Denis; Monet, Pierre. "Formes d'émergence, d'affirmation et de déclin des capitales. Rapport introductif", *Les villes capitales au Moyen Âge. Actes du XXXVIe Congrès de la Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public (Istanbul, 1-6 juin 2005)*. Paris: Publications de La Sorbonne, 2006: 13-56.

5. Brand, Hano; Monet, Pierre; Staub, Matial. "Préface", *Memoire, Communitas, Civitas. Memoire et conscience urbaines en Occident à la fin du Moyen Âge*. Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2003: 7-9; Gauvard, Claude.



the construction of the city walls, the control of the territory and the preservation of *fueros* (special laws pertaining to each city) and privileges. These first steps were to be followed by others that would provide solidity to urban identity and would have been of great help in overcoming divisions, conflicts and internal disagreements, facilitating the internal cohesion of the group against external threats.⁶ Thus it can be said that urban identity was also constructed based upon responsibilities and efforts, which served to cultivate support, skills and common work. The cities worked together on these challenges, maintaining their costly walls in good condition and preserving their territory from threats and unwarranted appropriations. This common need even stretched to encompassing and politically justifying the need for taxes and *pechos consejiles* (local tributes). The dispersed nature of politics in Medieval urban society would explain the need for different identity paradigms for each situation.⁷

However, identity also had a negative side which strongly ratified the exclusion of those who were different in some way and were shut out from the political construction of the city. Within the cities there were communities of Mudéjars, Jews and foreigners which did not form a part of them. This excluding and differentiating factor also applied to rivalries among similar groups, more specifically, between *concejos* and royal cities of the Crown, or with the lords who were the enemies of the city.⁸

Nevertheless, the cohesion given by identity gave great strength to neighbours, while also slowing down, in some cases, the capacity to disagree when discussing the interests of the group and the 'common good'.⁹ It is possible that this urban coexistence and collectivity favoured cooperation and guaranteed social peace as it consolidated and gave meaning to the rules of respect and status, which ensured the social disciplining controlled by each group. It also gave each individual participatory

"Marqueurs sociaux et symboliques des capitales. Rapport introductif", *Les villes capitales au Moyen Âge. Actes du XXXVIe Congrès de la Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public (Istanbul, 1-6 juin 2005)*. Paris: Publications de La Sorbonne, 2006: 287-302.

6. Jara, José Antonio. "Identidad política urbana: Una reflexión sobre las políticas comunitarias y las identidades comunitarias en la Castilla urbana del siglo XV", *Ante su identidad. La ciudad hispánica en la Baja Edad Media*, José Antonio Jara, coord. Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2013: 93-116; González González, Raul. "La otra identidad urbana: miedo, fragilidad y derrota en los discursos populares sobre la ciudad". *Medievalia*, 18 (2015): 27-57.

7. Asenjo, María. "Ambición política y responsabilidad de gobierno. El 'común' en Segovia y Valladolid a fines de la Edad Media", *La comunidad medieval como esfera pública*, Hipólito Rafael Oliva, Vincent Challet, Jan Dumolyn, María Antonia Carmona, eds. Seville: Universidad de Seville, 2014: 73-106.

8. Asenjo, María. "Integración y exclusión. Vicios y pecados en la convivencia urbana", *Pecar en la Edad Media*, Ana Isabel Carrasco, María del Pilar Rábade, eds. Madrid: Sílex, 2008: 185-208.

9. Some ideas in: Blickle, Peter. "El principio del 'bien común' como norma para la actividad política (La aportación de campesinos y burgueses al desarrollo del Estado Moderno temprano en Europa Central)". *Edad Media. Revista de Historia*, 1 (1998): 29-46; Kempshall, Matthew. *The Common Good in late medieval political thought: moral goodness and material benefit*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999; Lecuppre-Desjardin, Élodie; Bruaene, Anne-Laure Van, eds. *De Bono Comuni. The Discourse and Practice of the Common Good in the European City (13th-16th c.)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010.



rights and a sense of integration, going so far as to define in a multifaceted way their different aspects.

Citizens used the social, economic, emotional and religious connections they had to create a sign of identity, which served to give them recognition and place them in society. This identity stayed with them for life, sometimes going beyond the space of the city and the territory where the memory of the characteristics related to that specific group reached. However, of these details—which had to be recognised by other people in neighbouring cities or other parts of the kingdom—it was generally the identity of the city together with their legal and social status that enabled individuals to be categorised.¹⁰ Thus, the status of foreigner was associated to parameters of recognition that were fuelled by the concepts of urban identity in the city of origin.¹¹

To some extent, this form of identity which accompanied individuals, and which was useful in urban environments in the Middle Ages, could be perceived in the villages of Spain until the 1960s and 1970s. Often, when outsiders arrived who were relatives of residents in the village, they were asked: 'who are you from?'. This stems from a curious manner of recognition that gave a specific identity, which in a village or city was more important than the individual and which gave a family or a group their status, position and history. It was a way of recognising personal identity that almost survived into modern times but which has apparently disappeared in today's more individualised and fragmented society. Nevertheless, even in our society, with few references of social origin, identity is still of use for associating people to archetypes and psychological characterisations and schemes that seem necessary for the recognition of the 'other'.¹²

Identity was therefore necessary for social groups in the city and individuals participated in it up to a point of forming an archetypal image in which they became very wrapped up in an existence in which competitiveness was not particularly

10. Jara, José Antonio. "Percepción de 'sí', percepción del 'otro': la construcción de identidades políticas urbanas en Castilla (el concejo de Cuenca en el siglo XV)". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 40/1 (2010): 75-92.

11. Asenjo, María; Igual, David. "Mercaderes extranjeros en Valladolid. Una ciudad entre dos mares. 1475-1520", *La Península Ibérica entre el Mediterráneo y el Atlántico. Siglos XIII-XV*, Manuel González, Isabel Montes, eds. Seville-Cádiz: Diputación de Cádiz- Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2006: 55-72; Bello, José Manuel. *Extranjeros en Castilla (1474-1501). Notas y documentos para el estudio de su presencia en el reino a fines del siglo XV*. La Laguna: Centro de Estudios Medievales y Renacentistas de la Laguna, 1994; Diago, Máximo. "Integración social de los hombres de negocios italianos en Valladolid a comienzos del siglo XVI", *Valladolid. Historia de una ciudad. Actas del Congreso Internacional. Vol. I. La ciudad moderna (Valladolid, 7-11 Octubre 1996)*. Valladolid: Ayuntamiento de Valladolid, 1999: 669-678; Ladero, Miguel Ángel. "Los genoveses en Sevilla y su región (siglos XIII-XVI): elementos de permanencia y arraigo", *Los mudéjares de Castilla y otros estudios de Historia Medieval andaluza*, Miguel Ángel Ladero, ed. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1989: 283-312; Solórzano, Jesús; Arizaga, Beatriz. "Protéger et contrôler la présence et les activités des étrangers dans les villes portuaires du Nord de la Couronne de Castille au Moyen Age". *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 117/1 (2010): 209-222.

12. Jara, José Antonio. "Consciencia, alteridad y percepción: la construcción de la identidad en la Castilla urbana del siglo XV", *Construir la identidad en la Edad Media. Poder y memoria en la Castilla de los siglos VII a XV*, José Antonio Jara, Georges Martin, Isabel Alfonso, eds. Cuenca: Universidad Castilla-La Mancha, 2010: 221-250.



high since personal security was associated to status and accompanied by a range of different identity references for the person. It is important to make these clarifications so as to avoid confusing the behaviour of today's urban society and that of Medieval cities with respect to identity related phenomena. In our times, it seems we are still sensitive and receptive to forms of identity, on all scales, from urban origin and nationality to identification with political parties, humanitarian actions, the colours of football teams and other cultural and musical movements.¹³ However, these points apart, it is important to recognise that the difficulty in studying the perception of urban identity in the past is hindered by a lack of documentary and iconographic sources which allow the reconstruction of the scope of this political manifestation.¹⁴

Indeed, the city that was built on this variety of identity markers had also elaborated a particular political identity that protected and defined its citizens, with objectives of collective interest and sustained by proposals and values that appealed to the common good. It was probably this option that led citizens to rivalries, confrontation and conflict, while also helping to preserve the jurisdiction of the Crown against the growing manorialisation in the realms of the Crown or to expand its territories by incorporating new villages. Once towns or cities were manorialised, identity also acted and prevented abuse since resistance to the increasing demands of jurisdictional lords was based on the strength of their force as a political entity, the assets they accumulated and the privileges and ordinances that helped them resist as governmental units.¹⁵

The coexistence of sub-identities within the city was compatible with a town or city's strength, action and capacity to resist a range of very different threats. It is reasonable to suppose that the cohesion of the community, which had allowed the urban area to function since its origins, would have changed as the relationships of social forces and political conflicts gave rise to new balances of power. Thus, from the mid-14th century onwards, the city transformed into a collective manorial entity governed by an oligarchic power. This was better suited to a more dispersed society and facilitated the integration of the city and its territory. Nevertheless, the question arises as to how far cities needed to exhibit their particular identity

13. Rosser, Gervase. "Myth, image and social process in the English medieval town". *Urban History*, 23/1 (1996): 5-25.

14. The analysis of the personal involvement of experience in the construction of identity has aroused interest in historiography, although a higher valuation is given to the theme in contemporary history, from the perspective of psychology. It directs its attention to dominant and non-dominant groups for the identification of the factors determining the memory of their identities. See: Montero, Alicia Inés. "Identidad e identidades: la identidad política en la historia urbana medieval. Balance historiográfico y perspectivas de análisis". *Estudios Medievales Hispánicos*, 1 (2012): 121-142; LaCapra, Dominick. *History in Transit. Experience, Identity, Critical Theory*. Ithaca-New York: Cornell University Press, 2004: 1-34.

15. Solórzano, Jesús. "De 'todos los más del pueblo' a la 'república e comunidad': el desarrollo y la consolidación de la identidad de común de Laredo en los siglos XIV y XV". *Anales de Historia Medieval de la Europa Atlántica*, 1/1 (2006): 61-106; Franco, Alfonso. "Fuensaldaña y los Vivero. Un conflicto antiseñorial". *Hispania*, 59/3 (1999): 823-855. About the political reach of baronial concejos see: Monsalvo, José María. *El sistema político concejil: el ejemplo del señorío medieval de Alba de Tormes y su concejo de villa y tierra*. Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 1988.



and what means they used to perfect their mechanisms of internal cohesion and singular appearance. The occasions in which this was necessary were diverse. However, the most important ones included situations of armed conflict, debates or disputes between competing powers, whether this was between rival towns or nobles. Secondly, identity was important for cities in their struggles to gain the status given to each of the royal cities and their hierarchical position before the king, whether this was in the meetings of the *Cortes*, in taking a seat or when having the first word in debates, and also in relation to royal titles displayed in documents and diplomas.¹⁶

Other questions revolve around the relation between urban identity and the origins of Spanish national identity: a modern-day political concept rooted in the past, going back further than the Peninsular War against Napoleon's troops in 1808, dating back to the early modern period¹⁷ and the end of the Middle Ages. Seemingly, the rise of the Spanish national political identity, strongly connected to that of the Crown of Castile and its monarchy, was closely related with the cities and towns in the kingdom that played a central role in strengthening the identity of the kingdom. Thus, it can be assumed that at the end of the Middle Ages, to develop their identities, the cities employed argument, discourses, symbols and myths that would be useful for the purpose of gaining favour with the monarch.

2. The uniqueness of urban identity

The aspects of identity necessarily had to derive from a uniqueness which made each city different from others. Indeed, the urban development in each city —its walls, gates and symbolic buildings— gave rise to a clearly identifiable image. These marks of identity were supplemented by the law, *fueros* and privileges granted by the monarchs, and historical privileges that were renewed each time a new monarch ascended to the throne. Another marker of identity was the name of the city itself, whether this was inherited from Roman times or a new creation in the Medieval period. The explanation of the origins of the name tradition or legends played a central role. In addition, in a society marked by values of honour in which the city was viewed as being a living social entity, a city's inhabitants and a glorious past bestowed 'honour'. The city's religious traditions were deeply rooted and associated with the veneration of ancestors buried in its churches and the patron saints that were worshipped in the processions and celebrations held by the inhabitants. Religious foundations of convents and monastery were set up for the glorification and memory of the city or town, helping to reinforce its urban singularity.¹⁸ This

16. Asenjo, María. "Arguments politiques et culture urbaine...": 107-130.

17. Ballester, Mateo. *La identidad española en la Edad Moderna (1556-1665)*. Madrid: Tecnos, 2010.

18. Rucquoi, Adeline. "Les villes d'Espagne: de l'histoire à la généalogie", *Memoria, communitas, civitas. Mémoire et conscience urbaines en Occident à la fin du Moyen Âge*, Hanno Brand, Pierre Monnet, Martial Staub, eds. Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2003: 145-166.



occurred in Andalusia where these foundations did not form a network of religious institutions, instead the monasteries and convents symbolize the splendour of the nobles and *concejos*.¹⁹

Finally, there were the titles of each town or city and the associated symbols which served to identify them outside of the city boundaries. The first were earned for merit and recognition within the hierarchy of the towns and cities when the monarch acknowledged courage shown or services rendered to the king and kingdom.²⁰ This distinction had legal and political consequences, since only towns and cities possessed and wielded jurisdiction over residents and inhabitants of the town and its villages.

Historical memory must be added to this equation, collected in part in the royal chronicles. These are associated to the monarch. However, these royal chronicles are not only reflected in these tales since they also sowed a seed for the creation of more stories which have survived the test of time thanks to the testimonies of citizens. From the 15th century onwards, cities set down their own chronicles to preserve and recreate the memory of their past glories and values.²¹

3. Oligarchic power and urban identity ambitions

The city authorities or the *regimiento* would have been responsible for the ideological construction and its political justification in favour of an urban identity with singular characteristics. Here, it is important to remember that the governors had gained power in the mid-14th century and, after more than a century of rivalries and struggles, there commenced a political experience of *regimiento* or *concejo cerrado* ("closed council") that placed the government of the city in the hands of a dozen or so knights, noblemen and arbiters. After the creation of the *regimiento*, ratified by monarchical power in 1345, a policy of government was established in which self control and balance among the members of the oligarchic *concejo* was reminiscent of that of some oligarchic republics. Thanks to this model, many individual ambitions, which threatened internal balance and caused conflicts, were thwarted. In cities with a marked presence of noblemen, this group polarised affinities and generally fuelled political intrigue into which the governors and knights of the cities saw themselves inevitably dragged. However, we cannot forget that violence and disorder favoured

19. Vilar, Hermínia. "Religión e identidad urbana: seculares y mendicantes en las ciudades del sur de Portugal en la Baja Edad Media", *Ante su identidad. La ciudad hispánica en la Baja Edad Media*, José Antonio Jara, coord. Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2013: 263-285.

20. Valladolid was granted distinction by the King of Castile Alfonso VII in a document signed in Burgos on 6th November 1152; this was ratified by Alfonso X: Miura, José María. "Conventos y organización social del espacio. Fundadores y fundaciones dominicas en la Andalucía medieval". *Historia Urbana*, 2 (1993): 85-111.

21. Quesada, Santiago. *Idea de la ciudad en la cultura hispana de edad moderna*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 1992.



the commendation and support of the weak, always in exchange for compensation and income which were the common ambition of all.²² For this reason, there were frequent complaints of abuse by the governors for acting against the good of the *republica*, a term which referred to the political constitution that encompassed the city and its land or territory.

It is well-known that the oligarchic group in Castilian cities was formed by knights and nobles with agricultural patrimonies and that they organised themselves into lineages, guilds or factions to fight among themselves for power and privileges.²³ The knightly trait of the oligarchy, with a military vocation, comprises one of the peculiarities of Castilian cities with respect to the rest of Europe. It also brought important consequences to the political arena of the kingdom. Nevertheless, from the 14th century and throughout the following one, there is evidence of the increasing presence of native merchants in Castilian cities who played an important political role in the framework of the community of citizens.²⁴ One might wonder why a minority of traders with their own identity did not claim greater political weight, as occurred in European cities where a practical policy was implemented and a corporative discourse was started that talked of 'members' in Flanders.²⁵ It seems that the predominance of knights and aristocrats was firmly established and not even in the case of cities such as Burgos, where traders were the most powerful group, did they manifest their own identity, since they let themselves be organised in a manner similar to that of the knights and grouped into similar organisations called *cofradías de caballeros* ("confraternities of knights").²⁶

Neither was the political context of development of the royal cities of the Crown of Castile similar to that of the European cities. We must not forget that from their creation the towns and cities had a high capacity for management and organisation, they applied their common law, enshrined in the *fueros* and privileges, but most were under the jurisdiction of the king. This impeded the full deployment of their political powers, and this had consequences for the construction of a singular identity for the

22. Monsalvo, José María. "Parentesco y sistema concejil. Observaciones sobre la funcionalidad política de los linajes urbanos en Castilla y León (siglos XIII-XV)". *Hispania*, 53/185 (1993): 937-969.

23. Asenjo, María. "Structuring Urban System as Bonding Process in Castilian Oligarchic Society in fifteenth-century", *Oligarchy and Patronage in Spanish Late Medieval Urban Society*, María Asenjo, ed. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009: 29-50.

24. Guerrero, Yolanda. "'ser y pertenecer' a la élite: estrategias de reproducción del poder en el Burgos bajomedieval", *Ante su identidad. La ciudad hispánica en la Baja Edad Media*, José Antonio Jara, coord. Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2013:75-92; Caunedo, Betsabé. *Mercaderes castellanos en el golfo de Vizcaya (1475-1492)*. Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1983; Caunedo, Betsabé. "Un importante papel de los mercaderes de Toledo a finales del siglo XV: abastecedores de la Casa Real". *Anales Toledanos*, 16 (1983): 139-149; Esteban, Asunción; Izquierdo, María Jesús. "Familias 'burguesas' representativas de la élite palentina a fines de la Edad Media". *Studia Historica. Historia Medieval*, 10 (1992): 101-146.

25. Boone, Marc. *À la recherche de la modernité civique. La société urbaine des anciens Pays-Bas au Moyen Âge*. Brussels: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 2010: 39.

26. Casado, Hilario. "Una familia de la oligarquía burgalesa del siglo XV: los Alonso de Burgos Maluenda", *La ciudad de Burgos. MC aniversario de la fundación de la ciudad, 884-1984. Actas del Congreso de Historia de Burgos*. Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1985: 143-162.



urban community. In royal cities and towns, the power of the monarchy was not as oppressive to the political ambitions of cities as that of the lay lords and the ecclesiastical lords. However, in the 15th century, a process was started of increasingly involving cities in the politics of the kingdom, something that would bring about consequences for their political future. This was in part as a consequence of the identification of the knights and gentlemen that governed the cities of Castile with an aristocratic political model, their values, tastes and their presence in court circles. They did so with an attitude that was a consequence of the attraction for the mode of noble life, which fascinated the knights and gentlefolk of the cities.²⁷ They also felt proximity to the world of the nobility owing to their military profession, which had been their defining feature in the past and for which they maintained the chivalric code of values and their passion for hunting, military actions and jousting or tournaments.²⁸ The code of values and a common goal of overcoming challenges became the dream of all knights and gentlemen in a time when chivalric romance was spreading with great success throughout Castile.²⁹

For its part, the monarchy dealt with city representatives in clear terms that denote the category and the contents of a dialogue between lord-king and vassals-cities. It is known that this relationship created a mutual obligation based on 'service', since the vassal/server received tasks from his lord, but the lord depended on his vassals. When a lord requested a 'service', it was understood that he demanded that which he could not directly achieve, and therefore needed the support of his men.

In the hierarchical political model under which the city was governed, the knights and their values were imposed, creating relationships akin to chivalric codes in which loyalty and obedience were paramount. For this reason the king did not hesitate to take advantage of specific events to classify cities as 'good and loyal'. Alfonso XI gave this title to Valladolid for the first time in 1329, when he absolved it of all responsibility for the fire in the Monastery of Santa María de las Huelgas in the city while also reminding them of the shelter and protection that they gave him during his minority, following the death of his grandmother María de Molina. For these reasons, he called all the residents and inhabitants 'good and loyal' vassals.³⁰ Thus the town gained an identity of values with the world of the nobles and an acknowledgement of status

27. Gerbet, Marie Claude. *Las noblezas españolas en la Edad Media. Siglos XI-XV*. Madrid: Alianza, 1997: 347-349. A more theoretical analyse of the role of the noble statement in the 15th century in: Rucquoi, Adeline. "Être noble en Espagne aux XIVe-XVIe siècles", *Nobilitas. Funktion und Repräsentation des Adels in Alteuropa*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Otto Göttingen, Werner Paravicini, eds. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997: 273-299.

28. Gautier, Jean. "Les sociétés urbaines Léon-castillanes et la guerre: naissance des milices urbaines", *Les sociétés urbaines en France Méridionale et en Peninsule Ibérique au Moyen Age. Actes du Colloque de Pau (Pau, 21-23 octobre 1988)*. Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1991: 161-174; Asenjo, María. "Parentesco y sociedad en el origen de la nobleza urbana en Castilla. Siglos XII y XIII", *Villes et sociétés urbaines au Moyen Age. Hommage à M. le professeur Jacques Heers*. Paris: Presses Universitaire de Paris-Sorbonne, 1994: 141-148.

29. Riquer, Martí de. *Vida caballeresca en la España del siglo XV*. Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1965.

30. Arribas, Filemón. "Títulos y armas de la ciudad de Valladolid". *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología*, 28-30 (1941-1942): 1-23, 3-4.



that differentiated it from others, adding new characteristics to its identity.³¹ In 1422, in the Cortes of Ocaña, the *procuradores* ("deputies") of Valladolid obtained the title of 'most noble' for their town for the services rendered by its residents and inhabitants.³²

The signs of urban identity were becoming visible since they were also words and concepts that were used, a precise vocabulary selected for each political or legal circumstance. And, although the process by which identities were constructed during the Middle Ages is always difficult to reconstruct, we know that they existed and helped to determine urban singularity during this period. Modernists asserted that in the 16th century a dramatic change took place in the myth and symbolical representation of the city to signal that the identity process was to develop under more rationalist lines from 1500 onwards. However, although in the 16th and 17th centuries it seems irrefutable that changes were introduced in the way urban political behaviour was ritualised and adapted to the society of the moment, it is important to determine whether the adjustment was just a question of emphasis and interpretation or whether it was a radical alteration in perception and experience.³³

The conditions for the exhibition of identity at the close of the Middle Ages required staging and ritual because the illiterate society were more receptive to these than to written material. These stimuli produced the identification and the explicit acceptance of the message, the institution and its champions. However, in this field it was the monarchy that had ritualised its messages and had given them sacred value, thanks to the collaboration of the church. For this reason the members of the urban oligarchy paid attention to this representation of the monarchy's identity, participating and collaborating in coronations, burials, meetings of the *Cortes* and other events.

For their part, the *concejos* of this period continued to preserve the symbol *par excellence* that identified and safeguarded them: the *fueros* and privileges of the city.³⁴ Although the *fueros* continued in use in some areas until the early 16th century, they were gradually relegated after the Ordinance of Alcalá in 1348, which implemented the king's law and drew up local codes. This all occurred at the same time that Roman law, studied in the universities and disseminated by regulations and the king's tribunals, was applied.³⁵

31. Rucquoi, Adeline. "Des villes nobles pour le Roi", *Realidad e imágenes del poder. España a fines de la Edad Media*, Adeline Rucquoi, coord. Valladolid: Ámbito, 1988: 195-214.

32. Arribas, Filemón. "Títulos y armas de la ciudad...": 6.

33. Identity and the use of reasoned arguments has been studied by Jara. Jara, José Antonio. "Percepción de 'sí'...": 75-92.

34. García de Valdeavellano, Luis. "Sobre simbología jurídica de la España Medieval", *Homenaje a don José Esteban Urangoa*. Pamplona: Aranzadi, 1971: 89-134; Gibert, Rafael. "El derecho municipal de León y Castilla". *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español*, 31 (1961): 635-753; Torres, David. "Teoría y práctica de la acción de gobierno en el mundo medieval castellano-leonés". *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos*, 12 (1985): 9-87; Barrero, Ana María; Alonso, María Luisa. *Textos de derecho local español en la edad media. Catálogo de fueros y costums municipales*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1989.

35. The city of Soria maintained its *fuero extenso*, which the residents and *concejo* used to settle various matters. See: Asenjo, María. "La sociedad soriana. De las collaciones a las cuadrillas", *Fuero de Soria : 1256-2006: edición crítica*, María Asenjo, ed. Soria: Herald de Soria, 2006: 275-278.



Given that images had a great force of evocation, it seems that the *concejos* also used these to help build their identification.³⁶ The sign or banner, which could be the flag, was the symbol of the *concejo* that represented the town or the city. Another of the images was the seal used in their legal documents and provisions and was also placed on products elaborated in the city, thus carrying its image and prestige to faraway places. It is probable that the seal was the most widespread image and symbol of the *concejo* because it was included on all documentation issued by the city and on its consumer products.

In their seals, the cities and towns of Castile represented aspects of their urbanism or ensigns linked to them that, in some way, identified them in the minds of others.³⁷ The figure of the King Ferdinand III, who was the conqueror of the city, was chosen by Seville. However, the figures of San Isidoro and San Leandro also appeared on its seals. Segovia featured the aqueduct, which was the city's most emblematic monument, and each of the cities chose their own symbol in a similar way. These were symbols that caught the eye thanks to the simplicity of their direct message and which recognised the community of the *concejo*.

It is interesting to note here that in the late 15th century, many of the large cities in Castile did not possess a building for meetings. Instead they met in other spaces: at the doors of the cathedral, in the case of Seville, or at the church of San Miguel, in Segovia, or, in the case of Valladolid, in a rented building in the San Francisco district. Thus the public nature of their meetings was preserved, just as in earlier times.

4. Urban identity and royal power

Although Castilian cities reached a point where they wielded competences and powers over citizens and territories, they did not have the sovereign political ambition of Italian cities, to which they were similar in many respects. Instead, they always yielded to royal power. Throughout the course of the medieval centuries, the requirements and needs of the king had reinforced the role of the city in matters of the government of the kingdom and its competences of dominion over the people were

36. Anthropological studies have been very revealing and clarifying on the scope of symbolic representation. Pastoreau, Michel. *Couleurs, images, symboles. Études d'histoire et d'anthropologie*. Paris: Le Léopard d'Or, 1992.

37. We know that it was also featured on weights and measurements, and was used to mark cloth and other products made in the city. See: González, Julio. "Los sellos concejiles de España en la Edad Media". *Hispania*, 20 (1945): 339-385; Fernández, Marcos. *Los sellos de la ciudad de Sevilla*. Seville: Ayuntamiento de Sevilla, 1996. About monarchic stamps: Ruiz, Teófilo. "L'image du pouvoir à travers les sceaux de la monarchie castillane", *Génesis del Estado Moderno: Castilla y Navarra (1250-1370)*, Adeline Rucquoi, ed. Valladolid: Ámbito, 1987: 217-227.



also extended and diversified.³⁸ In particular, powers relating to matters of defence, taxation and justice.³⁹

However, in 15th century Castile, the situation was paradoxical since there was a reinforcement of royal power parallel to an awakening of political awareness in the cities and towns of the kingdom, fuelled by the resurgence of the community or the *común* of the citizens. This phenomenon also coincided to some degree with activity in scholarly circles, which theorised on the political role of cities, influenced by humanistic lines of thought.⁴⁰

The authoritarian monarchy did not seek to maintain its position only by means of vassalage because this implicitly contained the concept of pact and agreement between the parties, something that reduced its capacity for action. Thus it gradually imposed a more general dialogue targeting the residents and inhabitants of the royal cities, which seemingly connected with the subjects and wider social sectors, which it wished to maintain compliant and expectant. It was a time in which the vocabulary of the values relating to the individual slowly penetrated political discourse.⁴¹ Moreover, the 14th and 15th centuries were an era of dialogue between the king and kingdom. This attitude seemed to confirm that the Western royalty accepted the fact of being linked to their subjects and not exclusively to their vassals.⁴² It was under the Catholic Monarchs that the Crown of Castile started to follow a similar direction to the rest of Europe.⁴³ A more generalised dialogue was imposed, directed mainly at the cities, in which residents and inhabitants were more accessible and receptive to the messages of propaganda, which slowly penetrated political discourse.⁴⁴

For the authoritarian monarchy in the late 15th century, the acquiescence and acceptance of its subjects was a primary ambition, which was achieved through

38. Asenjo, María. "La aportación del sistema urbano a la gobernabilidad de reino de Castilla durante el reinado de los Reyes Católicos (1474-1504)". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 39/1 (2009): 307-328.

39. With respect to the recruitment of troops to ward off an attack, faced with the threat of invasion from the neighbouring kingdom of Portugal and in the context of Anglo-French rivalry during the Hundred Years War, it is illustrative how King Henry III in 1394 ordered Burgos and the areas and towns of its diocese to gather its inhabitants as labourers in groups of twenty, of which one was to be the captain, arming each man in accordance with his fortune and maintaining these men prepared: AMB. HI-2620. Toro (1394, October 24th).

40. Rucquoi, Adeline. "Democratie ou monarchie. Le discours politique dans l'Université castillane au XV^e siècle", *El discurso político en la Edad Media. Le discours politique au Moyen Âge*, Nilda Guglielmi, Adeline Rucquoi, coord. Buenos Aires: Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas-Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1995: 254-255. See also: Castillo, José Luis. *Política y clases medias: El siglo XV y el maestro salmantino Fernando de Roa*. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1987; Belloso, Nuria. *Política y humanismo en el siglo XV: el maestro Alfonso de Madrigal, el Tostado*. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1989.

41. Black, Antony. "Individus, groupes et États. Une approche générale comparée", *L'individu dans la théorie et la pratique politique*, Janet Coleman, dir. Paris: Publications de l'Université de France, 1996: 381.

42. Guenée, Bernard. *Occidente durante los siglos XIV y XV: los Estados*. Barcelona: Labor, 1985: 179-180. This link was a real contract with precise clauses whose non-compliance could justify their deposition.

43. Asenjo, María. "La aportación del sistema urbano...": 307-328.

44. Black, Antony. "Individus, groupes et États...": 381.



propaganda and royal legitimation.⁴⁵ For this it had unity in faith, which permitted a common language of values, laws, language, historical memory of the shared past and many other factors that it sought to make common, because the view was that a wide and homogenous social base would reduce political opposition and make government easier. However, the new model would require from the monarchy a vigilance and discipline, which would become more oppressive following the expulsion of the Jews in 1492. In this context, the Inquisition was called to have a key role in the unity of the Catholic faith as it would deal with controlling and repressing religious, moral and political dissension.⁴⁶

The search for new interlocutors in the increasing monologue of the authoritarian monarchy coincided with the political awakening of the *vecinos pecheros* ("resident taxpayers") in the cities of Castile in the late 15th century. Since the 14th century, documentary sources show that the citizens and *vecinos pecheros* of the city formed the *comunidad* ("community"), and that as 'the governed' they were subject to certain fiscal, military and defence obligations and had to respect and comply with the *fueros* and city laws.⁴⁷ They also benefited from all the privileges inherent in their condition of resident as well as to access to the *baldíos* of the city or town, a type of common land. In the community, the status of resident was inferred by birth into a Christian family with father and grandfather living in the city or town. It could also be acquired by marriage to a resident of the city, or after continued residence in the city with a dwelling, wife and children. In these cases, residency would be granted by the *concejo*.⁴⁸ After an official procedure and certain checks and payments, if all was in order and accepted, the applicant received a letter of residency and was inscribed into the municipal register.⁴⁹ Those who remained in the city yet were not residents were categorised as *forasteros* ("outsiders"). Residential status could also be lost if for most of the year the person in question did not keep a house with wife and children, or if a crime was committed that entailed a punishment of banishment or expulsion.⁵⁰

However, what really interests us about the community are the factors that led it to become more politically active from the mid-15th century, participating at the end

45. Bermejo, José Luis. "Orígenes medievales de la soberanía". *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, 200-201 (1975): 283-290; Nieto, José Manuel. "Sobre los orígenes de la idea de "comunidad política" en la Corona Castellano-leonesa". *Memoria y Civilización*, 6 (2003): 5-41.

46. Rabade, María Pilar. "Los 'tiempos' de la Inquisición durante el reinado de los Reyes Católicos", *La Península Ibérica en la era de los descubrimientos*, Manuel González, ed. Seville: Junta de Andalucía, 1997: 321-330.

47. Asenjo, María. "El pueblo urbano, el 'común'". *Medievalismo*, 15 (2004): 181-194.

48. Izquierdo, Ricardo. *Un espacio desordenado: Toledo a fines de la Edad Media*. Toledo: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 1996: 143 (doc. No. 1) (1477, October 24th). The request was made as a plea and the time of residency was supplied.

49. In this way the city showed its capacity to grant a right that was initially only accessible by birth. Bartolo de Sassoferrato (death in 1357) argued that the city had the authority to grant citizenship based on the *Civitas sibi princeps* principle, the city is its own prince. According to Bartolo, this argument was supported by the fact that the genesis of the *civitis* itself was not in the nature, but in the collective desire of the people, expressed by the channels of law. Kirshner, Julius. "Civitas sibi faciat civem: Bartolus of Sassoferrato's Doctrine on the Making of a Citizen". *Speculum*, 48/4, 1973: 694-713, 697.

50. Izquierdo, Ricardo. *Un espacio desordenado...: 144-146* (doc. No. 2) (1490, March 15th).



of the century in administrative tasks such as the collection of *alcabalas* ("sales taxes") levied by the Crown or facilitating the management and government of the city.⁵¹ At the end of the 15th century, it comprised the most lively and active group in the city, and was also the most ambitious with respect to political pretensions, as can be seen through its participation in the Revolt of the *Comuneros* ("commoners").⁵²

The set of common interests strengthened the cohesion of the urban population and coexistence, access to the common land, the possibility to use privately owned assets and the common responsibility to meet tax obligations and to defend against external attacks and threats. The good management of all these aspects of life in the city contributed to internal cohesion and a growing awareness that the survival of the *concejo* had depended on the strength and will to be a community. It is possible that this internal cohesion contributed to disseminating an image of identity of the city.

It was well-known that the model of organisation of the *común* ("labourers and workers") of the Andalusian cities and of Toledo had brought about results of stable representation in meetings of the *regimiento* ("urban elite") and for this reason the *cabildo de jurados* ("council") had become a critical element in the *regimiento* protected from *concejo* jurisdiction, which subjected them to that of the *Adelantado Mayor* ("Chief Governor"), who had to appoint a special judge to deal with its disputes. This privilege granted by Henry III on 26 February 1394 to the *jurados* ("councilmen") of Seville, was implemented in Toledo in 1422, although it was later revoked. Its independence was strengthened by means of exemptions and privileges, linked to the aim of giving the *cabildo de jurados* a critical function with respect to the *regimiento* that governed the city, which could only be achieved if they were out of the scope of *concejo* jurisdiction. Indeed, this model was implemented in both Toledo and Seville, where the complaints and requests of the *jurados* are a testimony to the abuse and irregularities of the governors.⁵³ With respect to this predominance, there was an absence of representatives of the *común* in the government of the towns in the Centre and the North or the inefficiency of the *jurados*, where these existed.⁵⁴ Indeed the

51. This can be seen in the case of Segovia from 1497 onwards, when the community requested a presence in the meetings of the *regimiento*. See: Asenjo, María. *Segovia. La ciudad y su tierra a fines del Medievo*. Segovia: Diputación de Segovia, 1986; Asenjo, María. "Los encabezamientos de alcabalas en la Castilla bajomedieval. Fuentes de renta y política fiscal", *Fiscalidad de Estado y fiscalidad municipal en los reinos hispánicos medievales*, Denis Menjot, Manuel Sánchez, eds. Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2006: 135-170.

52. Thus it was shown at the end of the 15th century in Segovia. See my work: Asenjo, María. *Segovia. La ciudad y su Tierra...*: 422-427. Consultar también la obra de Aurelio Pretel: Pretel, Aurelio. *La "comunidad y república" de Chinchilla (1488-1520). Evolución de un modelo de organización de la oposición popular al poder patricio*. Albacete: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1989; Asenjo, María. "Ambición política y responsabilidad...": 73-106.

53. Aranda, Francisco J. *Poder municipal y cabildo de jurados en Toledo en la Edad Moderna (siglos XV-XVIII)*. Toledo: Ayuntamiento de Toledo, 1992; Montero, Rosa. "La organización del cabildo de jurados de Toledo, 1422-1510". *Espacio, tiempo y forma*, 3/3 (1990): 213-258.

54. Tena, María Soledad. *La sociedad urbana en la Guipúzcoa costera medieval: San Sebastián, Rentería y Fuenterrabía (1200-1500)*. San Sebastian: Fundación Social y Cultural Kutxa, 1997: 346.



comunidad in Segovia demanded presence in the urban government as it requested to establish the figure of the *jurados*, in charge of representing the districts of the city.⁵⁵

This mobilisation would respond to a growing political participation and for this reason the urban communities would have passed from playing a passive and receptive role to demanding action and participation in the governance of the kingdom.⁵⁶ It is interesting to note that while the community was involved in tasks of governance, there was a recovery of its political role in the arguments and words of wise enlightened scholars and humanists such as Fernando de Roa, who in his observation on the 'Politics' of Aristotle focussed on the political role that corresponded to 'the middle classes'.⁵⁷

In summary, it is worth noting that the political functioning of the *concejo* and its capacity for internal cohesion were its strong points, and to be able to learn of the strategic points of the political organisation of the cities it is worth learning about its resistance in situations of extreme threats and conflicts. The most frequent ones were those which brought a city up against a rival city or even a noble power⁵⁸ which wanted to punish or humiliate a particular *concejo* in a city or town. In that case, the way to proceed was to take away its *fueros*, privileges and flag.⁵⁹ The removal of these symbolic references of the *concejos* was of vital importance and represented an unmitigated humiliation.

However, when the punishment came from the king, who penalised an act of treason, these details were not the focal point of the punishment. One such example of this in the case of the Crown of Castile was a harsh punishment meted out by King Henry IV to the town of Sepúlveda when, in 1474, after a first attempted alienation in favour of Juan Pecheco, Marquis of Villena, on 16 January 1472, the town put up opposition and sought the protection of Princess Isabella and her husband, Don Ferdinand, King of Sicily. The prince and princess promised to maintain it in the crown and to not alienate it under any circumstance.⁶⁰ The transfer made by Henry IV contravened the pragmatic sanction in its favour given in 1442 by King John II, which promised not to alienate towns under royal jurisdiction for any motive or reason.⁶¹ With the king

55. Asenjo, María. *Segovia. La ciudad y su tierra...*: 299-308.

56. Fortea, Juan Ignacio. "Los abusos del poder: el común y el gobierno de las ciudades de Castilla tras la rebelión de las Comunidades", *Furor et rabies. Violencia, conflicto y marginación en la Edad Moderna*, Juan Ignacio Fortea, Juan Ignacio Gelabert, Tomás Mantecón, eds. Santander: Universidad de Cantabria, 2002: 183-218.

57. Castillo, José Luis. *Política y clases medias: El siglo XV y el maestro salmantino Fernando de Roa*. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1987.

58. Bonachía, Juan Antonio. *El señorío de Burgos durante la Baja Edad Media*. Burgos: Universidad de Valladolid, 1988: 331; Guerrero, Yolanda. *Organización y gobierno en Burgos durante el reinado de Enrique IV de Castilla. 1453-1476*. Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1986: 66.

59. In 1284, the *concejo* of Alba wanted to humiliate and punish the *concejo* of Santiago de la Puebla and took its *fueros*, privileges and flag or banner. Shortly afterwards, King Sancho IV ordered they be returned. AHN. Diversos (Colecciones), 284, 4 (1284, November 27th Valladolid).

60. Sáez, Carlos. "Sepúlveda en la segunda mitad del siglo XV". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 9 (1980): 267-328.

61. Sáez, Carlos. "Sepúlveda en la segunda...": 661-667.



being in the proximity of Sepúlveda, he wished to go there personally to deal with the inhabitants and he sent Alfonso González de la Hoz as a messenger, who was detained by force in the outskirts and prevented from entering the town. Neither did they receive the king when he approached the town. Instead the governors informed him that they had gathered and debated the matter in the *regimiento*, agreeing that they would not receive him that day. As such, they requested him to return to Castilnovo, from whence he had departed, and told him they would notify him when he would be allowed to enter. The king responded to him by sending a letter bearing his signature and seal and once more demanding that they receive him as their king and lord within three days. They did not even receive him after the three days had passed. As such, with his 'absolute royal power' he decided to punish Sepúlveda for treason, removing all its franchises, liberties and privileges.⁶² In a second letter, he stated that the town would lose its name, its vassals and estates, lands, municipal areas and jurisdiction. He commanded all the lands dependent on the town that they should not obey its orders or letters, nor contribute taxes or give or pay them in coins or in bread. He told them they were no longer to watch or guard the walls and forts of the town because with this letter he removed them and exempted them from its jurisdiction. The situation was critical because the king even transferred this jurisdiction to another town, whose name was left in blank in the document, obliging all the residents of the land to swear obedience to the new unknown lord or town.⁶³

The punishment sought out the weak spot of the urban political structure to ensure that an example was made. He did not hesitate to remove the name of the town, as this was one of its key markers of identity. However, depriving it of the obedience of the villages in its lands and the manorial and jurisdictional control of these people was the harshest punishment imaginable. Fortunately, the cohesion of the *concejo* of Sepúlveda reacted to this threat and the links bonding the inhabitants of the town on those of its territory were maintained. Thus, the royal punishment did not endure and there were no divisions or losses of territory as a result of incursions or wrongful appropriations. The force and internal cohesion of the *concejo*, as well as the unity and harmony that remained in the face of attempts to break it up are of great note. Faced with the punishment of this king, this royal town reacted valiantly, refusing to be absorbed into a manorial dominion.

5. Influence of humanistic values and the predominance of an identity of the kingdom

As mentioned, a paradox was present in Castile in the 15th century as there was a strengthening of royal power parallel to an awakening of political consciousness in the

62. Sáez, Carlos. "Sepúlveda en la segunda...": 670.

63. Bonilla, Adolfo; Fita, Fidel, dirs. *Memorias de don Enrique IV de Castilla*. Madrid: Real Academia Historia, 1835-1913 : 670 (doc. No.192-193).



cities and towns of the kingdom, encouraged by the emergence of the *comunidad* as a new political institution in the daily life of cities and towns. This scenario coincided with the agitation shown by some intellectuals who theorised on the political role of cities and they did this by drawing upon humanistic influences.⁶⁴ The effects of these transformations were felt in the proposals submitted in the Cortes of Olmedo in 1445, where the king and the people were presented as forming a complementary, mystical body that was inseparably unified. There were other proposals to recover the feudal-vassallic pact between king and kingdom by which the king could be reminded of his obligations and political commitments with the kingdom, as occurred in the Cortes of Ocaña in 1469, in which the discourse of the *procuradores* ("deputies from the provinces") reminded the king that he acted as a servant of the kingdom.⁶⁵ This dialogue with the king that the *procuradores* engaged in, in the Cortes of Ocaña in 1469, was repeated in the Cortes of Valladolid in 1518, in the early stages of the Revolt of the Comuneros.

When assessing the resources of political identity put into play at the end of the 15th century and the start of the following one, it is important to acknowledge that urban political identity was manifested in all its splendour, in particular when it came to rivalries with other cities vying for a preferential position with respect to the king's power.⁶⁶ Just as if the cities were individuals, Burgos was ranked above all other cities, receiving the title of *Camara del Rey* ("Royal Chamber").⁶⁷ Other cities, such as Toledo, however, which had rivalled with Burgos since the 14th century, recommenced their struggle for supremacy over Granada at the end of the 15th century. The reason for this offence was that the recently conquered city was placed at the front in the royal title, and its symbol, a small pomegranate, was added to the royal coat of arms.⁶⁸ Thus, at the end of the 15th century the city of Toledo sent the Catholic Monarchs a letter and the cathedral chapter sent another, both drawn up by an eminent humanist, Canon Alonso Ortiz.⁶⁹ The aim of the missive sent by the *concejo* was not to seek open and direct conflict with Granada, but to make known its motives for the unhappiness felt

64. Monsalvo, José María, coord. *Sociedades urbanas y culturas políticas en la Baja Edad Media castellana*. Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 2013; Rucquoi, Adeline. "Democratie ou monarchie. Le discours politique dans l'Université castillane...": 254-255.

65. *Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y de Castilla*. Madrid: Imprenta de la Real Casa, 1866: 139, 767-769; Morán, Remedios. "'Alteza...mercenario soys'. Intentos de ruptura institucional en las Cortes de León y Castilla", *Coups d'État à la fin du Moyen Âge?*, François Foronda, Jean-Philippe Genet, José Manuel Nieto, eds. Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2005: 93-114; Nieto, José Manuel. "El 'poderío real absoluto' de Olmedo (1445) a Ocaña (1469): La monarquía como conflicto". *En la España Medieval*, 21 (1998): 159-228.

66. Asenjo, María. "Fiestas y celebraciones en las ciudades castellanas de la Baja Edad Media". *Edad Media. Revista de historia*, 14 (2013): 35-61; Benito, Eloy. *La prelación ciudadana. Las disputas por la precedencia entre las ciudades de la Corona de Castilla*. Toledo: Centro Universitario de Toledo, 1972.

67. Bonachía, Juan Antonio. "'Mas honrada que ciudad de mis reinos...': La nobleza y el honor en el imaginario urbano (Burgos en la Baja Edad Media)", *La ciudad medieval: aspectos de la vida urbana en la Castilla bajomedieval*, Bonachía Juan Antonio, coord. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1996: 169-212.

68. Asenjo, María. "Arguments politiques et culture urbaine...": 107-130.

69. Bertini, Giovanni Maria. "Alfonso Ortiz". *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 24/94 (1947): 99-102; Bertini, Giovanni Maria. "Un diálogo humanístico sobre la educación del príncipe don Juan", *Fernando el Católico*



by the city for this affront and the reasons supporting them to make such a claim with the monarchs.⁷⁰ Toledo was not asking for favourable treatment from the monarchs; it was appealing for the evaluation of its merits and contributions to the Crown and the kingdom over the centuries. In this way, the royal judgement would have to determine the place of each of the cities.

In the purest scholarly and humanistic style, a rational evaluation of the facts was started, recurring to the historical memory of the glorious and obliging past of Toledo to request the monarchs to be consistent with the political practice applied by their predecessors, the Trastámaras, since the mid-14th century. It is well-known that these monarchs, in particular John II (1419-1454) had opted for an aristocratic model and a courtly profile for the government of the kingdom, for which they had given participation to the royal cities with representation in the Cortes.⁷¹ It was in this circle of proximity to the king, in which *privanza* ("royal favour") was granted, that the nobles moved and where the cities had to find a position in rank and recognition.⁷² In this political framework, the arguments suggest the conviction of a just award expected from the king, as lord, and the value of the privileges granted for actions of loyalty, following a feudal model that seemed to be in force for all effects. It represented the set of values and principles that the royal cities had taken on for the purpose of serving the Crown.

The letter made use of metaphorical language that emphasised images, for example it spoke of the city of Toledo as the 'royal seat' from which the kings and their ancestors ruled all the Spains, a large part of France and all of Tingitania in Africa.⁷³

Reference was made to the memorable history of the Gothic past of Spain, which had supported the war against Islam and appealed to humanists as it connected with the late Roman imperial period.⁷⁴ This recollection of Spain highlighted the supremacy

y la cultura de su tiempo. *Actas del V Congreso de la Corona de Aragón*. Saragossa: Institución Fernando el Católico, 1962: 37-62.

70. Copenhagen, Carol. "Las cartas mensajeras de Alfonso Ortiz: ejemplo epistolar de la Edad Media". *Anuario de Filología Española*, 1 (1984): 467-483.

71. Copenhagen, Carol. "Las cartas mensajeras de Alfonso Ortiz...": 479-483.

72. Foronda, François. "La 'privanza' ou le régime de la faveur. Autorité monarchique et puissance aristocratique en Castille, XIIIe-XVe siècle". Paris: Université de la Sorbonne (PhD Dissertation), 2003.

73. *Ni creemos que avrán por molesto vuestras altezas reducirles a la memoria la preminencia, honrra y nobleza desta tan antigua su cibdad, que cuanto más es gloriosa tanto mayor decor añade a los títulos de vuestras coronas. esta es la silla real donde dominaron los reyes vuestros mayores a todas las Españas y grand parte de la Francia con toda la Tyngitana en África* ("We don't believe that your highnesses mind to remember the preeminence, honour and nobility of this so old city, because how major glorious it has, major respect add to the titles of your Crown, which is ruled from the same royal seat where your ancestors the kings ruled the all Spains, and a big part of France and all Tingitania, in Africa"). Copenhagen, Carol. "Las cartas mensajeras de Alfonso Ortiz...": 481.

74. Up until that point, however, only the first steps had been taken towards a model of unity between the Crowns and the Kingdoms. The concept of Spain was also alive and constant in the urban political arguments of Castilian humanists at the end of the 14th century. González, Rafael. "El mito gótico en la historiografía del siglo XV", *Los Visigodos, historia y civilización. Actas de la Semana Internacional de Estudios Visigóticos (Madrid-Toledo-Alcalá de Henares, 21-25 octubre de 1985)*. Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 1986:



of the Toledan seat of power, head of divine worship and the churches of Spain, the great holy councils presided over by the Visigoth kings, the royal tombs in the cathedral. It also alluded to another particular feature of the city of Toledo, the fact that it did not have its own arms or coats of arms, instead that it used the arms of the king. This lack of symbols of identity was related with the royalty of the Toledans which strictly protected and safeguarded the king.⁷⁵ In recognition of this merit, in the Cortes of Burgos in 1367, King Henry II granted the city the privilege of being able to bear the royal court of arms.⁷⁶ As the letter recalled, these flags and standards, symbols of the king and the city, were still in use, celebrating, as is said, the memory of 'your first victory'. This alluded to the end of the civil conflict in 1476, which was a tough pacification challenge for the country and the city of Toledo.⁷⁷

With respect to urban identity and the political force of the arguments, it is worth noting that, over and above the symbols in the honours and privileges that it had accumulated, and which were associated to the exemplary fulfilment of its obligations with the monarchy, were the faith and also the love and loyalty that the city had professed. The city was always convinced that the role of the city of Toledo was the fundamental core of this hierarchical political structure and it maintained the ambition of promotion and the obtaining of merits.

But what is interesting in this letter is the ferocity of Toledo which, aware of the importance of renown and the preservation of historical memory in the construction of urban identity, aimed to reduce Granada to such a low level that its identity should disappear owing to its condition as a defeated and disloyal city. For this reason, it proposed to eliminate its name as a just consequence of the military defeat in the fierce war and to rename it. This was an aspect of interest to the monarchy, since the importance of the city made the victory greater. This was the argument used by the monarchs when Toledo requested the pomegranate be removed from the royal coats of arms.⁷⁸ In their reply, the monarchs explained they had placed Granada at the front in the title as a result of the decision taken to incorporate the coat of arms of the kingdom of Granada into the royal coat of arms. This was because it was compulsory that in written documents the titles that were shown in the coats of arms should come before all the other titles of their kingdoms. They explained that the intention had never been to dispute the pre-eminence of the city of Toledo and, as proof of this, they undertook that, from thereon in, Toledo should come before Granada both in meetings of the Cortes, as well as in Institutional meetings of the kingdom and other

289-300; Linehan, Peter. *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993; Maravall, José Antonio. *El concepto de España en la Edad Media*. Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1964.

75. *Crónica del Rey don Pedro, Crónica de los reyes de Castilla*, ed. Cayetano Rossell. Madrid: Atlas, 1953: LXVI, 419 (year 2, chapter XVI).

76. Benito, Eloy. *La prelación ciudadana...*: 20.

77. López Gómez, Óscar. *Los Reyes Católicos y la pacificación de Toledo*. Madrid: Castellum, 2008.

78. On 20th of March 1492, because this was the date in which the letter was issued in Santa Fe by the Catholic Monarchs in reply to Toledo's requests. AMT. Cajón 1º, no. 24; AMT. Cajón 1º, no. 24, doc. 7, f. 85-87; Izquierdo, Ricardo. *Privilegios reales otorgados a Toledo durante la Edad Media (1101-1494)*. Toledo: Diputación de Toledo, 1990: 291-292 (doc. No. 172).



councils, but not in the title. This is what was decided upon, and they sent a letter to all the authorities and places in the kingdom, from the heir and Prince Juan to the arbiters of the towns and villages, so that they should learn of and abide by it.⁷⁹

Apparently the matter was clarified and Toledo did not obtain the reparation it had hope for to redress this effrontery. Indeed, in the solution the royal attitude and propaganda interests of the military victory of the *toma de Granada* took precedence to immortalise this in history and also in the pomegranates included in the royal coat of arms. There was little room for doubt that the communication policy of the monarchy was headed towards new modes of communication based on propaganda, and that the cities would continue to be necessary for communication with the subjects, although they would not play the same role.

The episode of the letter had served claim to refine all arguments in favour of the political cause of the urban identity of Toledo. Its reasons were entrenched in the defence of its prominence, honour, antiquity and nobility over all cities in Spain and its reasoning can be considered a paradigm of the city's ability to defend its urban political identity against a rival such as the city of Granada, in the same condition and of a lower category for being disloyal, but highly valued as an enemy city by the monarchs.

6. Urban memory and identity

If cities in the late 15th century were disregarded in the development of political identity, given the growing strength of monarchical power, the influence of political humanism opened new opportunities for the recreation of identity. The elaboration of the historical past of cities in local stories became a widespread procedure allowing the recreation of memorable events that distinguished the city and its inhabitants in the exercise of values consistent with the 'common good', virtue and model behaviours of 'civic humanism'.⁸⁰ Local history started to be set into print and disseminated; graphical representations of historical episodes of cities were less frequent. For this reason, an image preserved illustrating the founding of the city of Valladolid, during

79. *mandamos que aunque en el nombramiento de título preceda e se anteponga Granada a la dicha çibdad de Toledo como lo avemos ordenado que agora nin de aquí adelante para siempre en las cortes et juntas et otros ayuntamientos et abtos que se ovieren de faser (...) en que se aya de dar preçedencia entre unos e otros, que aya de preçeder e preçeda la dicha çibdad e reyno d Toledo ante e primeramente que el reino de Granada, asy en los votos como en el lugar e asyento que oviere de tener, como en otra cualquier manera...* ("we order that, although the name of Grenada is in our titles before than that of the city of Toledo according our instructions, forever in the Parliaments ['Cortes' and 'Juntas'] and in any meeting and acts and ceremonies that should do, where it must be defined the position of each one, the city and Kingdom of Toledo must take place before than the kingdom of Grenada, in the votes, seats or in any other item..."). Izquierdo, Ricardo. *Privilegios reales otorgados...*: 291-292.

80. Rucquoi, Adeline. "Les villes d'Espagne: de l'histoire...": 145-166.



the reign of Charles V, is a unique example.⁸¹ The episode of the founding of the city shows a group of Christian captives, and a horseman called Olit who has taken them prisoner. In front of the town, across the River Pisuerga, a lion attacks the Moor and kills him, after which the Christians face the lion and kill it. The story goes that in this very spot the new town of Valladolid would be founded, commemorating the name of the Moorish captain (*Valle-olit* > Valladolid).

This representation aimed to transfer the founding of the town to the period of the Reconquest and to recall the fact that the Muslim imprisoned and enslaved Christians. This representation is accompanied by a small footnote telling how the situation came to an end thanks to the appearance of a lion, a mythical creature that lived in a cave and attacked the tyrant. The violent death of the lion at the hands of the Christian captives incorporated the blood ritual that is present in the myths of the founding of the classical cities. This is how the appearance of the city, represented in the picture with its walls and towers, is explained. If it should be noted that this visual story gave the merit of founding the city to the Christians, combining this with myth, history and the blood ritual.

Thus it can be seen that these recreations, somewhere between fable and myth, suggest another approach to identity that, while the history of the kingdom was shared, cities could elaborate their own genealogies to glorify the collective actions of the city and the history of the kingdom.⁸² These histories would become an essential element of all urban communities possessing them.

7. Conclusion

The aim of this paper has been to emphasise that many of the urban identities were built on common challenges and difficulties. The dispersion of political power, encompassing many facets of social relations, made the role of urban identities fundamental, given that politics was also outside the hands of the urban governments, with it being openly manifested to achieve specific objectives. However, identity would end up being established in common politics and in general perception, strengthening internal cohesion. This common identity was represented by the oligarchic government of the city. However, in the late 15th century, the appearance of the 'community' of inhabitants brought about a new element of integration, with political ambitions in urban spheres.

The representations and symbols serving these urban identities were more problematic. Monarchical power seemed to almost wholly occupy the sovereign identity and the cities only brought before the king rivalries among themselves.

81. Asenjo, María. "Mémoire historique de l'origine de la ville et sa représentation. Le cas de Valladolid, une ville médiévale", *Ad urbe condita. Fonder et refonder la ville: récits et représentations (seconde moitié du Moyen Âge- premier XVI^e siècle). Actes du Colloque (Pau, 14-15 mai 2009)*, Véronique Lamazou, ed. Pau: Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour, 2011: 90-103.

82. Rucquoi, Adeline. "Les villes d'Espagne : de l'histoire...": 165-166.



These identity models of the cities of Castile did therefore not reach full political singularity, if so they would have been included in the identity of the kingdom, through the figure of the king who continued to be their nexus. In view of the lack of full political development of urban sovereignty, in which political identity could play a role, the options of the urban society were linked to the figure of the 'subject', as a model of governed citizen, with responsibilities to the king and the kingdom. And there is no evidence of exclusive claims of urban identity. The contemporary vision of full identities, in line with the models of nationalism that emerged within the framework of the bourgeois revolutions, does not therefore correspond with the forms of identity seen in the cities in the late 15th century. This lack of sovereign urban identity leads to the supposition that the ambitions were absorbed in the feelings of identity with the community of the kingdom. This was a political terrain in which, in the centuries to come, the monarchy would reserve an unquestionable leading role for the cities.



IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE AMONG THE TOULOUSE ELITE AT THE END OF THE MIDDLE AGES: DISCOURSE, REPRESENTATIONS AND PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

In Toulouse, in the 14th and 15th centuries, in a difficult and changing context, the urban elites, embodied by the well-known *Capitoulat*, actually make up a heterogeneous, mobile, and divided group. In spite of their social diversity and their differences, however, these men manage to establish a political identity shared by this group which includes high-ranking citizens and the ruling urban class. The purpose of this paper is to examine the to-and-fro movement between the Toulouse elites' otherness and identity, which thus invents urban identity, by studying discourses and representations, thanks to different sources (normative documents and *documents de la pratique*, such as notarial records), iconography, but also through the way of life and material culture.¹

KEYWORDS

Toulouse, Fourteenth-Fifteenth centuries, Urban elite, Identity, Notarial records.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Tolosa, XIV-XV saecula, Urbis electi, Identitas, Documenta notarialia.

Many different sources are available to help approach the question of discourse and representations of political identity in the ruling class in Toulouse at the end of the Middle Ages, in the present case the identity and difference among the elite. Some of these well-known written sources come from the city authorities (the well-known *Capitoulat* in Toulouse), but they also come from royal power represented in Toulouse by officials and different administrations which were established there between 1271 and the middle of the 15th century. In 1271, when the county of Toulouse became part of the crown lands, lots of royal offices were created in the town. Later on, between 1440 and 1450, in Toulouse the *Parlement*, a royal court and the highest level of French royal justice, was the first to be set up outside of Paris. Other documents are studied less to look into this theme of the identity of the urban elite: still in the field of discourse, practices and representation, they are of more interest for the sociology of the ruling urban class, both united and different, legal instruments, for example, are invaluable, in particular notarial records, the series beginning in Toulouse between 1350 and 1360.²

What comes across about the Toulouse elite in these different written sources at a time when, between the middle of the 14th and the middle of the 15th century, the social and political context was changing considerably? Two remarks can be made straightaway. The first is obvious: the only way we can know anything about these men is through the written or iconographic sources which have come down to us. Other sources have disappeared, in particular the oral ones, the harangues of the *capitouls* for example, which, nonetheless, played an important role in Toulouse's political life. However, these sources were usually put together by the Toulouse elite themselves and what comes across about these ruling classes in Toulouse is on the one hand their diversity and difference, and on the other hand their consensus, group and even urban identity.

The first thing that can be said is that it is indeed this both ecclesiastical and secular, medieval urban elite which made up its own identity, and at the same time that of the town; this can be called the collective consciousness, even a kind of urban culture special to Toulouse. This process consisted in the elaboration of a certain kind of discourse and representation produced by this elite, the aim of which was to underline their superiority over the others, that is to say the other social

1. Used abbreviations: ADHG, Archives Départementales de la Haute-Garonne; AMT, Archives Municipales de Toulouse.

2. Since my PhD Dissertation, my research has been focused on the dignitaries in Toulouse and their family life, and it has been based mainly on notarial records. See: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. *Les oligarchies toulousaines: familles et sociétés de la fin du XIII^e siècle au milieu du XVe siècle (1271-1444)*. Pau: Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour (PhD Dissertation), 1994 (directed by Béatrice Leroy). I then continued to do further research and qualify these first investigations, see notes 3 and 4. This text provides a synthesis of this process of maturation. The notarial records in Toulouse are to be found in the Haute-Garonne county archives, in the 3E collection, but also in the Saint-Sernin collection or in private records. These different archives are presented in: Wolff, Philippe. *Commerces et marchands de Toulouse (vers 1350-vers 1450)*. Paris: Plon, 1954: VII-XII; Saint-Martin, Catherine. *Saint-Sernin de Toulouse. Fonds des Archives départementales (sous-série 101 H) et fonds de la basilique Saint-Sernin. Inventaire des archives anciennes*. Toulouse: Conseil Général de la Haute-Garonne, 2000. The oldest record conserved for Toulouse covers the years 1349-1355 (ADHG. 3E 174). About 150 records for the years 1350-1450 have been conserved.



categories in the town (the *commun*, the *peuple de Toulouse* for instance), and over the power and authority from outside (the King for example). Yet these mechanisms also had an internal use: to put forward a whole series of criteria and signs, both in discourse and representation, but also in practices, which enabled them to recognize each other and to confirm that they did indeed belong to the urban oligarchy, the dignitaries.³

However, this was far from easy as they had to shape an identity for a group which was heterogeneous, mobile, and divided, and they had to do it in a changing context.

This paradox is probably just on the surface. On the one hand, it must be considered as an absolute necessity for political and social survival, not just for the group but also for the individuals who made up the group (It must not be forgotten that this survival in the Middle Ages was guaranteed by the group, by the community, *universitas*). On the other hand, this diverse elite emphasizes an urban collective consciousness, precisely at a time when royal power was becoming more and more present in Toulouse.

By comparing on the one hand, the discourse and representations of the dignitaries in Toulouse⁴ and, on the other hand, their practices in daily life⁵ one

3. I agree here with the definition of identity, its evolution and its impact given by Alain Rey: taken from the Low Latin (*identitas*), *ydemité* is vouched in the 14th century to mean the *qualité de ce qui est le même* ("the quality of what is the same"). The word evolved during the 17th century to mean *ce qui est permanent* ("what is permanent"). In the 19th century, *en droit et dans l'usage courant, il désigne le fait, pour une personne, d'être un individu donné et de pouvoir être reconnu pour tel* ("that means for a person, according to the law and to the common use, to be an individual being and the possibility of being recognized as so"). See: Rey, Alain. *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*. Paris: Dictionnaires Le Robert, 2000: 1774 (first edition published in 1992). This definition combines two dimensions, internal and external, a state (that which is) and a representation (to be recognized as such).

4. I studied the words used in detail, the context of their use, the discourse resorted to by the Toulouse elite or on behalf of the same elite between the end of the 13th century and the end of the 15th century in: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Se distinguer à Toulouse: supériorité sociale et fabrique de l'urbanité", *Distinction et supériorité sociale en Normandie et ailleurs (Moyen Âge et époque moderne)*. Actes du colloque (Cerisy-la-Salle, 27-30 septembre 2007), Jean-Marie Laurence, Christophe Manœuvrier, eds. Caen: Publications du Centre de Recherches Archéologiques et Historiques Anciennes et Médiévales, 2010: 221-240.

5. My work has also mainly focused on the material culture and on the way of life of the dignitaries in Toulouse. I have, in particular, examined and analyzed closely and exhaustively inventories made after death. See in particular (from the most recent works to the oldest ones): Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Tentures et textiles dans l'habitat civil à Toulouse aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles", *Le parement d'autel des Cordeliers de Toulouse. Anatomie d'un chef-d'œuvre du XIV^e siècle. Catalogue de l'exposition du Musée Paul Dupuy (16 mars- 18 juin 2012)*, Maria Alessandra Bilotta, Chaumet-Sarkissian, Marie-Pierre, eds. Paris: Somogy, 2012: 75-85; Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Lire et écrire chez les notables toulousains à la fin du Moyen Âge ? Quelques pistes sur la culture des élites laïques avant 1450", *Toulouse, une métropole méridionale: vingt siècles de vie urbaine. Actes du 58^e Congrès de la Fédération Historique Midi-Pyrénées (Toulouse, 14-16 juin 2007)*, Bernadette Suau, Jean-Pierre Amalric, Jean-Marc Olivier, eds. Toulouse: France Méridionale et Espagne-Fédération historique de Midi-Pyrénées, 2009: 145-162; Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Décor, parure et couleurs des intérieurs toulousains d'après les registres notariés à la fin du Moyen Âge", *La maison au moyen Age dans le Midi de la France. Actes du colloque (Cahors, 6-8 juillet 2006)*. Mémoires de la Société Archéologique du Midi de la France, Anne-Laure Napoléone, Maurice Scellès, eds. Cahors: Région de Midi-Pyrénées-Conseil Général du Lot-Ville de Cahors-France Méridionale et Espagne-Travaux et Recherches Archéologiques sur les Cultures, les Espaces et les Sociétés-Université de Toulouse II-Le Mirail, 2009: II,



can, it seems, shed a more subtle and accurate light on the interplay of identity and difference and show both the visible and the more hidden mechanisms at work in the society in Toulouse so as to try to understand the social and political complexity of the time better.

In the present paper I not only wish to study the normative discourse and representations which framed medieval society, but also to try and get to the bottom of the documents which bear witness to real practices. This kind of document taken from ordinary life and called *documents de la pratique*, notarial records for example, does not have as its main objective the justification of a certain conception of society but does in fact give us useful information about it and about the behavior and ways of the people it was composed of. I therefore propose to concentrate not on the norms but on actual practices and conduct. However, I do not intend to oppose the norms and conduct (as passed down in medieval documents), but rather to study the relations which exist between these different documentary records and to determine the meaning.

1. Prolegomena : historiographical points and insights concerning Toulouse

Before going any further, I would like to point out rapidly the changes both in the past and in the present concerning urban studies in France, and also to clarify the context surrounding Toulouse in the 14th and 15th centuries, in order to give a preliminary definition of what we mean by the Toulouse elite and dignitaries.

It must be pointed out that French bibliography has been considerably enriched over the past twenty years,⁶ especially concerning the elite, the urban elite in particular, (but also the rural elite) and concerning the question of urban identity. French urban historiography was founded by masterful monographs which made it

285-315; Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Piété et croyances du privé chez les notables toulousains à la fin du Moyen Âge", *Le ciel sur cette terre. Dévotions, Église et religion au Moyen Âge. Mélanges offerts à Christian Desplat*, Adiran Blazquez, Philippe Chareyre, eds. Orthez: Éditions Gascogne, 2004: 489-527; Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Paraître et pouvoir: vêtue et parure de puissants Toulousains au début du XVe siècle. L'exemple de la famille de Bertrand Tornier (1402-1403)", *Espaces nationaux et identités régionales. Mélanges offerts à Christian Desplat*, Adiran Blazquez, Philippe Chareyre, eds. Orthez: Éditions Gascogne, 2004: 489-527; Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Entre Toulouse et Toulousain: propriétés et cadres de vie de noble Bertrand Tornier et de sa famille au début du XVe siècle", *Habitats et territoires du Sud. Actes du 126e congrès du Comité Des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques (Toulouse, 4-9 avril 2001)*, Benoît Cursente, ed. Paris: Comité des travaux Historiques et Scientifiques, 2004: 235-259; Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Les élites toulousaines et leurs demeures à la fin du Moyen Âge: entre maison possédée et maison habitée", *La maison au Moyen Age dans le Midi de la France. Actes du colloque (Toulouse, 19-20 mai 2001). Mémoires de la Société du Midi de la France*, Anne-Laure Napoléone, Maurice Scellès, eds. Toulouse: Société Archéologique du Midi de la France-France Méridionale et Espagne-Université de Toulouse II-Le Mirail, 2003: I, 40-61.

6. As this bibliography is overabundant, I shall just deal with France and I can in no way aim at being exhaustive. I shall just give a few landmarks on the subject dealt with.



possible to follow the evolution in the institutions, societies and the elite of a town over a more or less long period of time in the medieval era.⁷ The urban elite thus took on a shape, and light has been shed on their origins, their composition and their history by social, prosopographical approaches, or by what was called the 'history of mentalities', very much in vogue between 1960 and 1980, and which, since then, has been taken over by cultural history and the history of representations which have held centre stage since the 1980s. The historians specializing in medieval Italy or in Northern European towns (the two big medieval urban centres)⁸ have opened up new approaches, and ways of reading which have been applied to the field of the study of the urban elite, in particular to the fields of distinction, superiority, notability, honour...⁹ The same can be said for the study of the genesis and development of the collective urban consciousness, of urban identity, and of urban culture, whether through civic religion or through other means, such as the practice of writing and urban historiography for example; symposiums have given rise to important collective works, but also to dossiers, for example in the review

7. Some of these exemplary monographs are for example: Schneider, Jean. *La ville de Metz aux XIII^e et XIV^e siècles*. Nancy: Imprimerie Georges Thomas, 1950; Wolff, Philippe. *Commerces et marchands de Toulouse...*; Favreau, Robert. *La ville de Poitiers à la fin du Moyen Âge. Une capitale régionale*. Poitiers: Société des antiquaires de l'Ouest, 1978 (2 vols.); Desportes, Pierre. *Reims et les Rémois aux XIII^e et XIV^e siècles*. Paris: A. & J. Picard, 1979; Coulet, Noël. *Aix-en-Provence. Espace et relations d'une capitale (milieu du XIV^e siècle – milieu du XV^e siècle)*. Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l'Université de Provence, 1988. We can mention, among the rare attempts to synthesize this issue: Duby, Georges, ed. *Histoire de la France urbaine*. Paris: Seuil, 1980: II. More recently on a European scale and not just a French one: Boucheron, Patrick; Menjot, Denis, eds. *La ville médiévale*. Paris: Seuil, 2003 (Pinol, Jean-Luc, dir. *Histoire de l'Europe urbaine*. Paris: Seuil, 2003: II); Dutour, Thierry. *La ville médiévale. Origines et triomphe de l'Europe urbaine*. Paris: Éditions Odile Jacob, 2003. To remain in the medieval French domaine, the different volumes of *l'Histoire de France* directed by Joël Cornette, make an updated synthesis accessible. See: Cornette, Joël, ed. *Le Grand Atelier de l'Histoire de France. Le Moyen Âge*. Paris: Belin, 2012 (the five volumes on the Middle Ages were first published between 2009 and 2011).

8. See recently: Crouzet-Pavan, Élisabeth; Lecuppre-Desjardins, Élodie, eds. *Villes de Flandre et d'Italie (XIII^e-XVI^e siècle). Les enseignements d'une comparaison*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2008.

9. The book by Jean Lestocquoy was a fundamental landmark in the debate on the urban elite (named at the time the 'patricians', 'patriciat'). See: Lestocquoy, Jean. *Les villes de Flandre et d'Italie sous le gouvernement des patriciens (XI^e-XV^e siècle)*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1952. Concerning the historiography of the urban elite, from the point of view of French medievalists, consult: *Les élites urbaines au Moyen Âge. Actes du XXVII^e congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public (Rome, mai 1996)*. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne-École Française de Rome, 1997. In particular: Crouzet-Pavan, Élisabeth. "Les élites urbaines: aperçus problématiques (France, Angleterre, Italie)", *Les élites urbaines au Moyen Âge. Actes du XXVII^e congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public (Rome, mai 1996)*. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne-École Française de Rome, 1997: 9-28. Some doctoral thesis and monographs have combined the study of a town and of its rulers, see for example: Dutour, Thierry. *Une société de l'honneur. Les notables et leur monde à Dijon à la fin du Moyen Âge*. Paris: H. Champion, 1998; Bove, Boris. *Dominer la ville. Prévôts des marchands et échevins parisiens (1263-1350)*. Paris: Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques, 2004. For urban notability, see collective works, such as: Laurence, Jean-Marie, ed. *La notabilité urbaine (Xe-XVIII^e siècle). Actes de la Table ronde (Caen, 20 et 21 janvier 2006)*. Caen: Centre de Recherche d'Histoire Quantitative de Caen, 2007; on the relations between the nobility, the town, the urban elite, see: Dutour, Thierry. *Les nobles et la ville dans l'espace francophone (XI^e-XVI^e siècles)*. Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2010; Laurence Jean-Marie; Manœuvrier, Christophe, eds. *Distinction et supériorité sociale (Moyen Âge et époque moderne)*. Caen: Publications du Centre de Recherches Archéologiques et Historiques Médiévales, 2010.



Histoire urbaine (created in 2000).¹⁰ All these different fields have been thoroughly explored, with great attention being paid to the words used by the medieval people and to the vocabulary used, namely to identify the degree of autonomy, the identity of the town, the distinctive features of the urban community as seen through its action and its representations (seals, banners, town halls ...), or yet again to designate the strata of political society.¹¹ However, the work done on urban identity has often concentrated more on the scale of the town as a whole, rather than on the individuals who made up the ruling urban class.¹² Yet, the mechanisms behind their decision-making, the circulation of information, the importance of the tax system, of economic circuits and markets, including those of art and luxury goods, and of material culture, (by bringing together texts and archeology), are also being studied to a great extent,¹³ which no doubt counterbalances a vision of things which may be too conceptual to the detriment of *la chair humaine*, the 'proie' *par excellence* of the *ogre-historien* according to Marc Bloch.¹⁴

10. Since a seminal symposium: Vauchez, André, ed. *La religion civique à l'époque médiévale et moderne (chrétienté et islam)*. Actes du colloque (Nanterre, 21-23 juin 1993). Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 1995; until an issue of: Richard, Olivier. "Religion civique (XVe-XVIe siècle)". *Histoire urbaine*, 27 (2010): 5-120; there have been more and more seminars and works on civic religion, that is also to say on *memoria*, awareness and urban identity. For example, the key work: Brand, Hanno; Monnet, Pierre; Staub, Martial, eds. *Memoria, communitas, civitas. Mémoire et conscience urbaines en Occident à la fin du Moyen Âge*. Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2003. The question of urban identity or urban identities has benefited from many different approaches over the last few years. Among the most recent publications: Crouzet-Pavan, Élisabeth; Lecuppre-Desjardins, Élodie. "Les mots de l'identité urbaine à la fin du Moyen Âge". *Histoire urbaine*, 35 (2012) : 5-130; for Southern France: Gilli, Patrick; Salvatori, Enrica, eds. *Les identités urbaines au Moyen Âge: regards sur les villes du Midi français. Actes du colloque de Montpellier (8-9 décembre 2011)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2014. The use and the culture of writing, mastered by technicians for the service of the town but also by members of the urban elite, made it possible both to govern, to dominate, but also to write the *laudes civitatis* and the history of the town. Among works in a very abundant bibliography, please see for the South of France the work: Bordes, François. *Formes et enjeux d'une mémoire urbaine au bas Moyen Âge: le premier "Livres des Histoires" de Toulouse (1295-1532)*. Toulouse: Université de Toulouse II-Le Mirail (PhD Dissertation), 2007 (directed by Michelle Fournié); Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique, ed. *Ab urbe condita... Fonder et refonder la ville: récits et représentations (second Moyen Âge – premier XVIe siècle)*. Actes de actes du colloque international de Pau (14-16 mai 2009). Pau: Presses Universitaires de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour, 2011; Chastang, Pierre. *La ville, le gouvernement et l'écrit à Montpellier. Essai d'histoire sociale*. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2013.

11. Bernard Guenée was a real master in this field. See the very subtle analysis of French political society, from words to concepts, in: Guenée, Bernard. *Un meurtre, une société. L'assassinat du duc d'Orléans (23 novembre 1407)*. Paris: Gallimard, 1992; as well as in much more of his work, in particular on medieval historiography.

12. Judicaël Petrowiste proposes a very stimulating study of the town but seen on this global scale. The study is based mainly on the urban cartulars and for the previous period: Petrowiste, Judicaël. "Tolosana patria". *Identité urbaine et rapport à l'extra muros à Toulouse entre le milieu du XIIe siècle et le milieu du XIIIe siècle*, *Les identités urbaines au Moyen Âge: regards sur les villes du Midi français. Actes du colloque de Montpellier (8-9 décembre 2011)*, Patrick Gilli, Enrica Salvatori, eds. Turnhout: Brepols, 2014: 41-61.

13. For Toulouse at the end of the Middle Ages, see the works mentioned in note 16 and see below.

14. *Le bon historien ressemble à l'ogre de la légende. Là où il flaire la chair humaine, il sait que là est son gibier* ("the good historian seems the ogre of the legend: where he smell the human flesh, he knows that there is his hunting"). Bloch, Marc. *Apologie pour l'histoire ou métier d'historien*. Paris: Armand Colin, 1997: 4 (the first edition was published in 1949).



The second introductory remark is that the context in Toulouse in the 14th and 15th centuries was ambivalent. On the one hand, Toulouse played the role of regional capital. It appears to have been an important town on not only the French religious scene (archbishopric, and mendicant convents), but also on the French political, administrative and judicial scene (the King was represented by the *sénéchal*, the *viguier*, a whole host of officials, and by the setting up of the first *Parlement* in the provinces in 1443-1444), yet these changes also imply that local authority, in particular capitular authority, had to make room for royal power, and there was a period of adaptation between these different sources of power with, in the end, a loss of power for the *capitouls*. In the 14th and 15th centuries they no longer had much in common with the *capitouls* at the end of the 12th century and at the beginning of the 13th century, even if the municipal judiciary still remained desirable and important for the town. Toulouse was an economic centre, both in terms of production and redistribution, and a university town. It contained colleges, had scholars, leaders, both clerics and laymen, and the elite who were the natural clients and partners of the local market.

At the same time, though, Toulouse and its inhabitants were experiencing the crises and the hardships of the time. The situation was indeed globally unfavourable until 1420-1430: the town had become depopulated, had become poorer, and had undergone numerous crises, fires... It no longer had the splendour of the previous period or of the following one, the period known as 'Toulouse's Golden Age', which opened with the reconstruction in the second half of the 15th century and which was symbolized by the extremely profitable trade of pastel.

The period, unsettled and full of contrasts, sometimes led to wonderful success, but also to terrible ruin: the Wheel of Fortune turns quickly, usually every three or four generations. Even so, the town remained one of the most important towns in the kingdom of France, yet we must not forget to situate the context in Toulouse in the background of crises, hardship and change which shook society at the time, and to situate Toulouse on the same scale as other towns of that period (Toulouse was not Florence!).

Finally, who are the Toulouse dignitaries under study here? The *corpus* is that of the oligarchs in Toulouse as observed mainly in notarial records between roughly 1350 and 1450, the documents coming from different places of authority in Toulouse, in particular the *Capitoulat* with, for example, the lists of the *capitouls* or the capitular acts...¹⁵ The group was composed of people coming from the families, of various origins and fluctuating destinies, who acceded to the *Capitoulat* but not just of them. More generally, men were in authority in Toulouse, with, more often than not, a foot in several circles of power and notability, either at the same time or successively, for example capitular circles, the king's offices and *Parlement* from 1444 on, but these networks intersected also in other spheres, economic ones (jobs), religious ones (brotherhoods, clerical circles, in particular canons, canonesses, and

15. See note 2. The final setting up of the *Parlement* in Toulouse in 1444 modified the conditions needed to belong to the group of dignitaries in Toulouse, hence the chronological dates chosen.



mendicant orders) and academic ones... These men hailed from a small number of families, (a dozen families or so for a town of about 30,000 inhabitants), and the same men met in the same circles of power and notability.

What is particular about the notarial records is that they shed light little by little on the daily, underlying mechanisms of the attainment, the conservation and the control of power by these dignitaries. They echo the documents published in work which has studied the emergence and the assertion of the consular offices, political, economic and social life, the world of the clerics, the place given to brotherhoods and hagiography, the importance of the law and jurists in Toulouse, the academic world ...¹⁶

First of all, I will present the plural nature of the registers of the discourse, and of the words used, which, on looking closer, correspond to documents of a different nature but were also destined for specific political and social use. Then I will show that the construction of identity embraces plurality and difference so as to accept both a social and political challenge on the part of the elite in Toulouse: to show the diversity of the individuals and of the families but to form at the same time the ruling classes. To finish I shall show that all the dignitaries in Toulouse, whatever their origins and life, aimed at excelling socially and being able to recognize each other by adopting the same discourse and representations but also similar ways of life. In order to respect the editorial constraints, in this paper I shall not always be

16. This work is varied and abundant. The references given below are not exhaustive. I have favoured seminal work, the most recent theses or latest, general publications which also give detailed bibliographies. In alphabetical order, the following work is stimulating: Bordes, François. *Formes et enjeux...*; Dubreil-Arcin, Agnès. *Vies de saints, légendes de soi L'écriture hagiographique dominicaine jusqu'au Speculum sanctorale de Bernard Gui († 1331)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011 (publication of the PhD Dissertation, directed by Michelle Fournié, at Toulouse II University in 2007); Foissac, Patrice. *Histoire des collèges de Cahors et Toulouse (XIVe-XVe siècles)*. Cahors: La Louve éditions, 2010 (the published version of the PhD Dissertation directed by Michelle Fournié, at Toulouse II University in 2008); Gilles, Henri. *Les coutumes de Toulouse (1286) et leur premier commentaire (1296)*. Toulouse: Académie de Legislation-Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1969; Macé, Laurent. *Les Comtes de Toulouse et leur entourage (XIIe-XIIIe siècles)*. Toulouse: Privat, 2000; Marandet, Marie-Claude. *Le souci de l'au-delà: la pratique testamentaire dans la région toulousaine (1300-1450)*. Perpignan: Presses Universitaires de Perpignan, 1998 (publication of the PhD Dissertation in 1984); Mundy, John Hine. *Liberty and Political Power in Toulouse*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1954; Nadrigny, Xavier. *L'information et espace public à Toulouse à la fin du Moyen Âge (v. 1330-1444)*. Paris: Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne (PhD Dissertation), 2006 (directed by Claude Gauvard), published under the title: Nadrigny, Xavier. *Information et opinion publique à Toulouse à la fin du Moyen Âge*. Paris: École des Chartes, 2013; Verger, Jacques. "Le cadre institutionnel de l'essor universitaire: les statuts de Toulouse". *Cahiers de Fanjeaux*, 35 (2000): 51-71; Viala, André. *Le Parlement de Toulouse et l'administration royale laïque (1420-1525 environ)*. Albi: Imprimerie des orphelins-apprentis, 1953; Taillefer, Michel, ed. *Nouvelle histoire de Toulouse*. Toulouse: Privat, 2002; Wolff, Philippe. *Commerces et marchands de Toulouse...*; Wolff, Philippe. *Les "estimes" toulousaines des XIVe et XVe siècles*. Toulouse: Bibliothèque de l'Association M. Bloch de Toulouse, 1956; Wolff, Philippe. *Regards sur le Midi médiéval*. Toulouse: Privat, 1978. Collective works: Dauvois, Nathalie, ed. *L'Humanisme à Toulouse (1480-1596)*. *Actes du colloque intrnational de Toulouse (13-16 Mai 2004)*. Paris: Honoré Champion, 2006; Fournié, Michelle, ed. "Saint-Sernin de Toulouse à la fin du Moyen Âge. Des reliques et des hommes". *Annales du Midi*, 111/226 (1999): 149-231; *Toulouse sur les chemins de Saint-Jacques. De saint Saturnin au Tour des Corps Saints*. Milan: Skira-Seuil, 1999; Bordes, François, ed. *Toulouse, parcelles de mémoire. 2000 ans d'histoire urbaine au regard de huit siècles d'archives*. Toulouse: Archives municipales de Toulouse, 2005.



able to enter into great detail, but I shall bring out the general outlines, highlight the important points and give interpretations backed by examples.

2. The plural nature of the registers of discourse, in documents of a different nature and for varied, specific social and political use

I shall not go back in detail over the analysis of the terms, the way they are used in different sources, and the way they change over time, that has already been explained with relevant examples in the published proceedings of the symposium held at Cerisy-la-Salle.¹⁷ I shall make a list below of the main remarks and results.

First remark: the same words are used in sources of a different nature to talk about individuals from diverse origins and with diverse status. They therefore tend to underline the social diversity of the elite in Toulouse, while at the same time referring to the main categories of medieval society.

Two main categories of documents exist: official documents coming from the capitular authority, (for example the lists of the *capitouls*, the records of the capitular elections, the official documents of the *Capitoulat...*), and notarial documents which record marriage settlements, wills, purchases, sales, rents... etc., slices of the life of these dignitaries in Toulouse.

These sources are of a different nature but also have different objectives: the normative acts establish and justify the political society in Toulouse while showing the social categories; the *actes de la pratique*, notarial records for example, differentiate between the social categories, and give the status of each in order to avoid confusion between individuals, (in the case of homonyms), and to set down the rights and duties of each with, as an objective, the probatory use of the *instrumentum publicum* which a notarial act constitutes. In both cases the documents give the men's Christian names and surnames, sometimes their nobility, their chivalrous or seigniorial titles (*seigneur de...*), their professional activity, especially if it was in trade, (the three best represented professions in the *capitoulat* were drapers, grocer-apothecaries and money-changers), or, above all in the 15th century, if they were jurists.

All the documents therefore underline the social diversity of the Toulouse elite and show that the oligarchy in Toulouse was subject to an important turnover, mainly because of the difficulties encountered at the time which left certain individuals and certain families on the sidelines while others replaced them after they had won fame and fortune. Indeed it can be seen that only a very small number of families, (less than ten), are present on the capitular lists for the whole of the medieval period, (from the middle of the 12th century until the end of the 15th century), and very often wealth and political influence went from one branch of the family to another, (hence the importance of the fact that their titles and seigneuries are

17. See note 4. Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Se distinguer à Toulouse...": 221-240.



mentioned); sixty or so families rose to municipal office (or others) but only thirty or so of these families monopolized the *Capitoulat*, and among these families, some were emblematic in the 14th century but found themselves in the background in the 15th century, others only appeared in the 15th century, while other families were only represented, recurrently and brilliantly, for one or two generations before disappearing...

So, in the capitular lists for example,¹⁸ an individual is known by his name, the *Capitoulat* he represented or the office he held in the *Capitoulat* (treasurer for instance). Sometimes his identity is completed by his titles to chivalry and nobility, from time to time by an added name (the Younger, the Elder...), possibly by his profession. All this supplementary information became more and more widespread from the 14th century onwards but was far from being systematic.

On the other hand, in the notarial records, the way these very same men are mentioned is far more subtle and detailed, and is systematic and constant, really constant, and this is true of all the notaries and for all the period under study. Each individual is identified by his name, the road he lives in, his trade or profession, in some cases by his added name, his chivalrous titles (squire, page or knight), the name of his seigneuries and his rank of nobility (*nobilis*, *dominus* or *domina*), and numerous titles of honour are mentioned more and more frequently over the years. It was in this way that distinction and especially notability, the two corner-stones of domination at the end of the Middle Ages, were established.¹⁹

This is understandable as the notary's act must enable a clear, reliable identification to be made as it has a probatory value. Therefore notaries are never vague but give an individual's exact status and titles. The objectives of acts originating in the *capitoulat* are of quite another nature. They highlight the capitular body, which is presented as being diverse and heterogeneous, but what is most important is that it is perceived as being a political body, a chapter of consuls, of *capitulares*, and *capitouls* assembled in a council, or a college, each of which represent a *capitoulat* belonging either to the *Cité* of Toulouse, (the districts around Saint-Etienne Cathedral and the

18. These capitular lists were copied by Abel and Froidefont before the destruction during the revolution: Abel and Froidefont. *Tableau chronologique des noms de Messieurs les Capitouls de la ville de Toulouse*. Toulouse: Lacour-Ollé, 1786. Historians can compare them and correct them thanks to the incomplete lists which come from capitular, royal and notarial documentation, etc. François Bordes is preparing an updated edition.

19. On honour, standing and notability in these honourable societies, see the seminal works of Claude Gauvard. For example: Gauvard, Claude. "*De Grace especial*". *Crime, Etat et société en France à la fin du Moyen Âge*. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1991; Gauvard, Claude. "La fama, une parole fondatrice". *Médiévales*, 24 (1993): 5-13; Gauvard, Claude. "Honneur de femme et femme d'honneur en France à la fin du Moyen Âge". *Francia*, 28/1 (2001-2002): 159-191; Gauvard, Claude. "L'honneur blessé dans la société médiévale", *Vengeance. Le face à face victime-agresseur*, Raymond Verdier, ed. Paris: Autrement, 2004: 160-169; the articles of Claude Gauvard brought together in: Gauvard, Claude. *Violence et ordre public au Moyen Âge*. Paris: Picard, 2005. See also: Dutour, Thierry. *Une société de l'honneur...*; see also his various contributions published after that date, especially: Dutour, Thierry. "La notabilité urbaine vue par les historiens médiévistes francophones aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles", *La notabilité urbaine (Xe-XVIII^e siècles)*, Jean-Marie Laurence, ed. Caen: Centre de Recherche d'Histoire Quantitative, 2007: 7-22.



Château Narbonnais, and the main trading streets), or to the *Bourg* of Toulouse, (the districts around Saint-Sernin basilica, the University, and certain professions).

Second remark: among these categories, the titles of chivalry, of nobility and of seigneurie are present but not always to the same extent according to the nature of the document and the chronology.²⁰ The political and social uses of the documents can explain these variations.

Thus, in the capitular lists, the use of chivalrous titles, (*scutifer*, *miles*), is particularly widespread from 1270-1280 and in the 14th century, whereas the use of professions developed well before 1270 and, as we have seen, the use of the notaries was constant throughout the whole period. This tends to make one think that the use of these titles was really emphasized, especially by the *Capitoulat* in Toulouse, at the time when the *Capitoulat* was confronted with the incorporation of Toulouse to the Crown (1271), at the time when the *capitouls* were faced with royal power, and with royal administrators who encroached upon and then reduced the capitular prerogatives and power, (1271 and the following years). At the same time, the groups of people ennobled by the King were more numerous in the first half of the 14th century. The capitular lists also underline this but will already do so far less in the 15th century, whereas, as I have already pointed out, it is still mentioned frequently by the notaries.

Generally speaking, this shows that the models of chivalry, of nobility, or at least the possession of a seigneurie, remained the prevailing paradigms for any high-ranking citizen, whatever his social origin. Yet the displaying of these titles also depended on the political context, the nature of the document and its use.²¹

It can moreover be seen that certain seigniorial titles, seigneur of such and such a place in the capitular lists and acts, are pointed out and described in the greatest of detail in the *actes de la pratique*, notarial records for instance, because in Toulouse and its region the cases of coseigneurie were very frequent, if not the most numerous: these men sometimes called themselves *seigneur de tel lieu* in the records of the capitular elections, in the tax registers (*estimes*) drawn up in the capitular

20. On the heritage and the place given to urban chivalry in the Southern towns of France and in Toulouse, see the seminal article on Toulouse by: Wolff, Philippe. "La noblesse toulousaine: essai sur son histoire médiévale", *La noblesse au Moyen Âge*, Philippe Contamine, ed. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1976: 153-174, or in: Wolff, Philippe. *Regards sur le Midi médiéval...*: 213-231; and the work of John Hine Mundy: Mundy, John Hine. *Liberty and Political...*; Mundy, John Hine. *Society and Government in Toulouse at the Age of the Cathars*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1997. More recently, still for the 12th and 13th centuries, see: Macé, Laurent. *Les comtes de Toulouse et leur entourage (XIIe-XIIIe siècles)*. Toulouse: Privat, 2000. On a larger scale, see: Aurell, Martin. "La chevalerie urbaine en Occitanie (fin Xe-début XIIIe siècle)", *Les élites urbaines au Moyen Âge. Actes du XXVIIe congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public (Rome, mai 1996)*. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne-École Française de Rome, 1997: 71-118.

21. I wholly agree with the idea of the omnipresence of the importance of the nobility in the town, or rather of the nobles in the town, (an assumption which did not go without saying for traditional historiography in the French-speaking world, which, on the contrary, underlined the alterity of the nobility and the town), as well as the idea of the variety of different situations observed from one town to another, from one kind of documentation or thematic to another. See: Dutour, Thierry. *Les nobles et la ville...*



sphere, whereas the notaries' records reveal very often that they are only *coseigneur* of...²²

The nature and the use of these sources are varied: each different source therefore develops a terminology adapted to its specific objectives, which does not prevent the historian from discerning the fluidity and the mobility of the ruling classes in Toulouse, brought on by the crises and changes at the end of the Middle Ages.

Third remark: a historian is also confronted with words whose use and meaning have changed over time. I shall just give one example here but it is representative and is used very frequently. It is the term *burgens*, bourgeois.

Chronologically, in Toulouse and in other places, the term *burgens* first had a topographical, geographical meaning (it meant the people who inhabited the 'bourgs', whereas *cives* meant the people who inhabited the episcopal cities) but from the 12th century, the word also had a judicial meaning. Bourgeois then meant a member of the community benefiting from privileges (granted through franchises, and customs charters) which represented the rights of the bourgeoisie, granted in accordance with several criteria (living in the town for some time, contributing to the town's expenses...). Becoming a member of the bourgeoisie, a specific judicial status, was not accessible to all the citizens: it was reserved for those who held an important position in the town, including city nobles. It is therefore easy to understand how this word took on another social and honorary meaning.²³

The case of Toulouse fits these definitions exactly but reveals specific, original aspects: if the topographical then social and honorary meaning seem to be ensured, the essence of bourgeois is not clearly associated with any judicial meaning.²⁴ Toulouse was separated into two distinct parts organized around the *Cité* and the *Bourg*. 12th and 13th century documents, such as the *Coutumes de Toulouse* (1286),²⁵ talk about *cives* and *burgenses*, which refer to these two distinct parts. However, a social meaning steadily superimposed itself on this geographical meaning (maybe

22. On this theme of the coseigneurie, which has, up to now, been dealt with very little, see a recent study, which nevertheless is about an earlier period: Débax, Hélène. *La seigneurie collective. Pairs, pariers, paratge, les coseigneurs du XIe au XIIe siècle*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2012.

23. For Toulouse, see the seminal article by Philippe Wolff: Wolff, Philippe. "Civitas et burgus", l'exemple de Toulouse", *Die Stadt in der europäischen Geschichte, Festschrift Edith Ennen*. Bonn: L. Röhrscheid, 1972: 200-209; or in: Wolff, Philippe. *Regards sur le Midi medieval...*: 201-211. I refer you back to the big French urban monographs mentioned in note 7, to the thesis by Thierry Dutour on: Dutour, Thierry. *Une société de l'honneur... already mentioned (bourgeois de Dijon and bourgeois du Duc)*. A practical synthesis, the entry by: Dutour, Thierry. "Bourgeois", *Dictionnaire du Moyen Âge*, Claude Gauvard, Alain de Libera, Michel Zink, dirs. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2002: 187-188.

24. See: Wolff, Philippe. "Civitas et burgus...": 200-209. On these issues and for a town in the southern half of France, please read the stimulating article by: Grélois, Emmanuel. "La bourgeoisie à Clermont: caractérisation d'une population aux contours incertains (fin du XIIe siècle-XIVe siècle)", *La notabilité urbaine (Xe-XVIIIe siècle)*, Jean-Marie Laurence, ed. Caen: Centre de Recherche d'Histoire Quantitative, 2007: 67-78. The case of Narbonne has been analysed in detail in the works of Jacqueline Caille: Caille, Jacqueline. "Narbonne, une et plurielle à la fois", *Les identités urbaines au Moyen Âge: regards sur les villes du Midi français. Actes du colloque de Montpellier (8-9 décembre 2011)*, Patrick Gilli, Enrica Salvatori, eds. Turnhout: Brepols, 2014: 147-168.

25. See: Gilles, Henri. *Les Coutumes de Toulouse...*



judicial or with some legal meaning?). This was perceptible as early as the 13th century, but became more widespread in the 14th and 15th centuries. Among the population of Toulouse, in particular in the notaries' records, one can find ordinary *habitantes*, *commorantes*, *residentes*, but also the *cives* and *burgenses*, a list which calls to mind judicial urban hierarchies. Yet books about the bourgeoisie, which exist in other French towns, do not exist in Toulouse. These books register people who obtain bourgeois status in accordance with specific criteria. It was a judicial status based on residence, tax, rights and obligations. In the books the diverse denominations, *habitantes*, *commorantes*, *residentes*, *cives*, *burgenses* correspond to different kinds of individual status and situations: people who lived in Toulouse, had just arrived, stayed for different lengths of time, (students for example), people who had settled there; and finally those who were integrated and had become part of the town, some of them having acquired enough notability and honour to be called *citoyens* or *bourgeois*. In the end, the use of these two terms with a social and honorary meaning prevailed in the 14th and even more so in the 15th century.

Indeed the confrontation of normative sources and *sources de la pratique* provides examples of nobles, (that is to say of men mentioned as nobles in certain documents and whose nobility had indeed been proved), also referred to as *burgens*. In some cases that can still correspond to the topographical meaning, (they live in the *Bourg*, and come from high-ranking families there: *noble Etienne Maurand, bourgeois de Toulouse*, 1441, *noble Pierre Raimond d'Aurival, écuyer et bourgeois...* 1443 for example),²⁶ but this usage carries with it an honorary meaning above all. What is more certain consuls who represented the *capitouls* of the *Cité*, whose families came from the *Cité*, and who they themselves lived there, were nonetheless called *burgenses* from the very end of the 14th century and in the 15th century (*Guillaume de Saint-Antonin, pour le capitoulat Saint-Pierre Saint-Géraud [capitoulat de la Cité], bourgeois...* for example).²⁷ In the account of the entry of King Louis XI in Toulouse in 1463, the population of the town was divided up into the following categories:

*Ipsi domini de capitulo Tholose, gaudentes de ipsius domini nostri regis primo iocundo adventu, congregatis solito more in domo communi Tholose nobilibus, burgensibus, mercatoribus et aliis civibus et plebeis dicte civitatis Tholose...*²⁸

The social and honorary meaning of *cives* and *burgenses*, and especially of *burgenses*, the use of which had spread, now prevailed, and *bourgeois* had become a mark of

26. Respectively: ADHG. 3E 2959, f. 135v; ADHG. 3E 6966, f. 321.

27. ...*de partita Sancti Petrique Geraldii dominus Guillermus de Sancto-Antonio burgensis...* AMT. BB 273, chronique 131, 1436-1437. In 1441-1442 (AMT. BB 273, chronique 136) the same man was the treasurer of the *capitoul*s, he is moreover called a money-changer in documentation. Transcriptions and illuminations have been put online on the site of the municipal archives of Toulouse by François Bordes, the author of the PhD Dissertation: Bordes, François. *Formes et enjeux...* (see note 9), and director of the municipal archives of Toulouse. Other examples are given in: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Se distinguer à Toulouse...": 228.

28. AMT. AA3/277 (I quote the main categories according our subject).



esteem. Medieval writing, whatever its nature and throughout a long period of time (from the 12th to the 15th century), superimposed and classified the different uses and meanings of *burgens*. The first meaning, which was geographical, never totally disappeared, but other meanings were added with a social and honorary signification, and it was this mark of esteem which, little by little, prevailed.

Other terms, in particular *nobilis*, or those which refer to cultural and professional skills, *magister* for example, also underwent a similar evolution which, once added to honorary epithets, led to a hierarchy in the sedimentary range of social distinction.²⁹ These variations, and this polysemia, but also the very subtle grammar of society in Toulouse, are not only due to the different nature of the documents or the changes over time or a certain political context, they also try to respond to a challenge.

3. A challenge: showing the diversity of individuals and families in a society in which everyone knows perfectly well 'who is who', while at the same time forming 'the' group of leaders to serve the town and the Common Good

Diversity and difference stand out in the notarial records in which the scribes used the whole range of social classification: chivalrous titles, nobiliary titles, seigniorial titles, professional rank, honorary epithets, added names or precisions which enabled people not to mix up homonyms...³⁰ Discourse was organized around a very subtle use of grammar, which was used with accuracy and precision by the notaries.

At the same time, these very same men were all included in the creation of a homogeneous group of leaders through words and image. The texts refer to them as the *Capitulum consulum*, *Consilium consulum Tholose*, the chapter or council of the consuls in Toulouse, the seigniors of the chapter (with a linguistic manipulation to go from *capitulum* to *capitolium*),³¹ like the *capitulares*, the *capitols* but also the

29. For the details and examples of this analysis of words, I take the liberty of referring to my contribution: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Se distinguer à Toulouse...": 226-232. From the municipal documents at the end of the Middle Ages, Xavier Nadrigny notes, just like me, the uncertain outlines of these social groups, see: Nadrigny, Xavier. *Information et opinion publique...*: 420-425 (Annexes, "Recherche sur la hiérarchie sociale à Toulouse à la fin du Moyen Âge": the author underlines the contradictions surrounding the term *bourgeois* because of its polysemous evolutions, whereas other entries (titles of notability, competence...) indicates domination and social eminence).

30. Nadrigny, Xavier. *Information et opinion publique...*: 232, 234, 236.

31. The oldest trace of this linguistic manipulation *capitulum/capitolium* is to be found already in 1296 in the *Commentaire des Coutumes de Toulouse*, see: Gilles, Henri. *Les Coutumes de Toulouse...*: 158-159. Playing with latin and the *langue d'oc*, (the language spoken in the South of France), the *capitols* managed to switch their 'chapter' to the level of 'Capitole'. This was well and truly acquired at the beginning of the 16th century but it can be seen coming into being throughout the final years of the Middle Ages. See: Bordes, François. "Des seigneurs du chapitre aux décurions du Capitole, ou l'Antiquité au service du pouvoir", *Les Antiquités de ville à la Renaissance. L'exemple de Toulouse. Actes de la Journée d'étude (Toulouse, 5*



concapitularii, the *nobiles et potentes viri domini de capitulo regie urbis et suburbis Tholose* (1463).

Without hiding the plurality and the diversity of individual identities, the texts coming from the *capitouls* underline the capitular group, the collegial structure, which does away with individuals, but is, on the contrary, inclusive as the *capitouls* as a collective whole represent Toulouse, *l'universitas Tholose*.³²

There are pictures which correspond to these texts, the famous *Livre des Histoires*, known for a long time as the *Annales* of the *capitouls* of Toulouse. At the beginning of the 13th century the consuls in Toulouse decided to make municipal cartularies, (one for the *Bourg*, the other for the *Cité*). At the end of the 13th century, these books were modified, as they were already too full, and one of these modifications, decided on by the *capitouls*, was the creation of the *Premier Livre des Histoires* which brought together the proceedings of the annual capitular elections and the portraits of the *capitouls* for each year. The texts were extended in the 14th and 15th centuries and became real chronicles... to the glory of the *capitouls* and their politics of course. This *Premier Livre des Histoires* was copied and illuminated until 1532, then 11 other books were to follow until the French Revolution.³³

What were these books used for? Who was lucky enough and had the opportunity to look at their magnificent illuminations? It was just the *capitouls* and the high-ranking guests passing through Toulouse, not of course the population. These books were kept under lock and key at the Town Hall, *Maison Commune*, (then, from the beginning of the 16th century, in the tower of the *capitouls'* archives), like treasures of administrative memory, (the rights, privileges and different liberties of the *capitouls* of Toulouse). This administrative memory was to become the history of the *Capitoulat* and the town of Toulouse. The outstanding thesis of François Bordes, the director of the municipal archives of Toulouse, has enabled the *Premier Livre des Histoires*, which was destroyed to a great extent during the revolutionary *auto-da-fé* in 1793, to be reconstituted and studied. Fragments have come down to us, (about 30 folios out of more than 200 chronicles), but François Bordes used copies and later municipal cartularies to reconstitute it. The folios which have come down to us can be admired on the website of the municipal archives of Toulouse.

These chronicles and capitular portraits, some of which are real paintings, are both the crucible and record of the creation of the common identity of this group of leaders, shown to be united and homogeneous (whereas we have seen their

octobre 2007). Toulouse: Université de Toulouse II-Le Mirail, 2007: 1-9 (Online version: Bordes, François. "Des seigneurs du chapitre aux décurions du Capitole, ou l'Antiquité au service du pouvoir". *Bibliotheca Tholosana*. 27 June 2014 <<http://bibliotheca-tholosana.fr/inside#!Intervention/16/1>>).

32. This process seems to have started in the first half of the 13th century through the creation of the Toulouse *universitas* and the emphasis put on a *mystique de l'identité collective* ("the mysticism of the collective identity"), all contained in an urban identity built up around its relationship with the extra muros, see: Petrowiste, Judicaël. "'Tolosana patria'...": 53-61. At the end of the Middle Ages, this tendency can be seen spreading to the scale of the individuals making up the capitular class.

33. I refer you to the excellent PhD Dissertation by François Bordes: Bordes, François, *Formes et enjeux...* already mentioned, and also to the presentation of this documentation on the website of the municipal archives of Toulouse.



diversity) and at the same time they are the crucible and record of the creation of urban identity in Toulouse.

Whatever their social origin, the *capitouls* are always portrayed in group portraits using the same codes of representation which therefore remove the social differences which may have existed between these men: they are shown wearing the *capitouls'* black and red coats, at council meetings, talking and governing the town, with their coats of arms above them, be they nobles or not. The capitular college took precedence over the origins of the individuals which it was composed of (whereas of course everybody knew who was who), going as far as to represent itself as the terrestrial reflexion of the celestial, apostolic college!³⁴

What explanations can be given? What interpretations can be put forward? There are three possible complementary ways of seeing things.

First, this type of portrait of the consuls of Toulouse, represented carrying out their functions, refers to the prevailing political ideology of the time, above all concerning the notions of *universitas* and the *Bien commun*, Common good, two canons of good government which were widespread in Western towns at the end of the Middle Ages.³⁵ One can call to mind, for instance, the Siennese magistrates represented on the famous fresque known as the Good Government in the Town Hall in Sienna.³⁶

Secondly, in the case of Toulouse, it was a way for the *capitouls* to show that they were united and unified. They were sometimes not really united ... as profound divisions and clans existed among the members of the *Capitoulat*. Several disquieting events in Toulouse's political life bear witness to this, like, for example, the uprising in 1419 led by Bernard de Roaix, a member of an illustrious family in Toulouse.

34. I am thinking in particular of the twelve *capitouls* in prayer at the feet of the Virgin and Child, presented by the apostles (AMT. BB 273, chronique 112, 1412-1413) or of the capitouls of the year 1447-1448 (AMT. BB 273, chronique 141) but today dated 1453, in prayer and whose heads receive the Holy Spirit's tongues of fire. On this last illumination, see: Bordes, François. "Le feuillet des Annales manuscrites de Toulouse dit de 1447: nouvelle datation, nouvelle interprétation". *Mémoires de la Société Archéologique du Midi de la France*, 66 (2006): 270-273; Bordes, François. "Bulletin de l'année académique 2007-2008. Nouveaux éléments sur le feuillet de 1452-1453 des Annales manuscrites de Toulouse". *Mémoires de la Société Archéologique du Midi de la France*, 68 (2008): 300-301.

35. For a Southern town not far from Toulouse, Montpellier, but in this case without any portraits of urban rulers, urban government books and chronicles, the famous *Thalami*, show this political ideology. See on this subject: Chastang, Pierre. *La ville, le gouvernement...*: 185-227; and the current Thalamus research programme (directed by Vincent Challet). See: Challet, Vincent. "Le Petit Thalamus: un monument-document de l'histoire montpelliéraine". *Bulletin Historique de la Ville de Montpellier*, 34 (2009): 24-37. On the theme of the Common Good, see the publications of an important symposium: Lecuppre-Desjardins, Élodie; Van Bruaene, Anne-Laure, eds. *De Bono Communi. The Discourse and Practice of the Common Good in the European City (13th-16th c.) Discours et pratique du Bien Commun dans les villes d'Europe (XIII^e au XVI^e siècle)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010. In particular for the southern towns, see in this rich volume: Rigaudière, Albert. "Donner pour le Bien commun et contribuer pour les biens communs dans les villes du Midi français du XIII^e au XVe siècle", *De Bono Communi. The Discourse and Practice of the Common Good in the European City (13th-16th c.) Discours et pratique du Bien Commun dans les villes d'Europe (XIII^e au XVI^e siècle)*, Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, Anne-Laure Van Bruaene, eds. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010: 11-53.

36. Read the last study, which attracted attention, and which gives a political interpretation to this painting: Boucheron, Patrick. *Conjurer la peur: Sienn 1338. Essai sur la force politique des images*. Paris: Seuil, 2013.



He was a supporter of the party called *bourguignon* but claimed a position that he could no longer hold when faced with some of the new, powerful, noble families, as he was too heavily in debt.³⁷ The divisions among these men did not succeed in the *Livre des Histoires* in upsetting the representation of a certain homogeneity and display of unity which was there to exhibit and assert their power, to defend their prerogatives with regard to royalty and its representatives (towards the *sénéchal*, the *viguier*, and the *Parlement*), and thus fashioned the identity of their group and of their town, which they embodied and whose rights and freedom they defended.

Finally, these representations of the capitular body, which often conceal the titles of each individual so as to favour the coats of arms and notability of the group, both in the texts and images, were a way, underlying at first but very much present, of asserting that it was not each *capitoul* who was a knight, a noble, or someone of renown because they were influential and honourable, but it was the whole body of the *capitouls* which was noble; this was to be known later on as the *noblesse de cloche*, conferred on someone on their entry into the *Capitoulat*. Officially Charles VII was forced into according this privilege in 1420, but the *capitouls* had been working on it for a long time and later on there were to be other milestones in the construction of capitular nobility: in 1420, the *capitouls* obtained the right to acquire noble estates while being exempt from paying the *franc-fief*, which finally led to the fact that accession to the *capitoulat* vouchsafed access to nobility.³⁸

In the 14th and 15th centuries, the *Capitoulat* was progressively deprived of lots of its previous power by the King's officers and then by the members of the *parlement*. The *Capitoulat* remained, of course, an inexorable place of power in Toulouse, but from then on just on a municipal scale, (which was not so bad all the same!). It therefore remained a place of great power in Toulouse, but from then on it was just one place of power among others, and the *capitouls* were inclined to put all their energy into defending the privileges of their group, which for them, at the same time, was closely associated with defending the privileges of the town. The *Capitoulat* was to remain above all, right up to the Revolution, a place for the notability of Toulouse; it was an unavoidable passage for any person of renown at some point or other in his life or career, and, because of this, the assertion of capitular nobility

37. There were indeed periods of great tension and division in the midst of the *capitoulat*, in 1419 for example, during a *bourguignon* uprising instigated by Bernard de Roaix, a member of a very old family from the families of note in Toulouse, but who was considerably impoverished at that time, see: Wolff, Philippe. *Commerces et marchands de Toulouse...*: 50-55; Nadrigny, Xavier. *Information et opinion publique...*: 199-237 (chapter "La révolte"), especially 209-231. Over and above Bernard de Roaix's *bourguignon* leanings, it was really the recent nobility and the power of money of certain members of the ruling class in Toulouse (the Ysalguier, and the Molinier families: their wealth came from money-exchanging and they had been ennobled by the King), which were denounced by Bernard de Roaix.

38. In line with the manipulations *capitulum/capitolium* mentioned above right from 1298, in 1316 a *vidimus* coming from the *capitouls* used for the first time the formula *capitulum nobilium regie urbis et suburbii Tholose*. During the 1420 inquiry concerning the payment of *franc-fief*, the main argument was based on the idea that the *capitouls* were called, both in their public and patent letters, *citoyens nobles toulousains* ("noble citizens of Toulouse") and on the idea that the expression *capitulum nobilium urbis et suburbii Tholose* is used ... See: Richardot, Henri. "Le fief roturier à Toulouse aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles". *Revue historique du Droit français*, 14 (1935): 307-359, 495-569.



became an all important condition in the representation of the group, whatever the origins of the people it was composed of.

Yet beyond the discourse and images of this group of people in authority in representation, in my opinion the identity of the group was formed just as much, if not more, by the adoption of similar kinds of behavior, and of the same kind of lifestyle.

4. All the high-ranking citizens in Toulouse had the same codes of distinction and notability in their lifestyle based on the importance of accumulation

It has been underlined that this group of people in authority tried to stand out, whatever their social origin, by a display of titles, by chivalry, by nobility, or by their coats of arms. Sometimes, however, even before they had access to nobility, this group stood out above all because of its lifestyle, based on the accumulation of different elements each of which was one more sign of nobility.

What were these criteria?

First of all, the use of a whole series of denominations and titles which refer to the high-ranking citizen in a very well-mastered grammar of discourse adapted to various uses. This has already been pointed out.

These men also had recourse to very varied methods to integrate nobility, an objective they all had in common: one became a noble at birth, through marriage, or thanks to a patent of nobility, by the purchase of a seigneurie or coseigneurie, through entry to the *Capitoulat*, or very simply by displaying the lifestyle of a noble ...Some combine several different ways: Jean Amic, for example, a rich merchant very much in the public eye in the 1440s, who had already been a *seigneur* or *coseigneur* in the region of Toulouse, accumulated royal offices and was only made a noble in 1445, the year he became the King's *viguier* in Toulouse, he remained a squire (*domicellus*) a long time, then became *miles Tholose* or *chevalier de Toulouse* at the beginning of the 1460s both in the notary's records and in the records of the *Parlement* ...³⁹

In the 14th and 15th centuries, nobility declared thanks to the possession of titles corresponded to a precise status, acknowledged by one and all, the virtues of chivalry had by then become integrated in nobility, but that did not prevent nobility being acquired in many different ways, sometimes at birth, through marriage, or ennoblement, but also more and more often, slowly and progressively, by purchasing seigneuries or simply by adopting a lifestyle which followed the noble or aristocratic model.

39. On Jean Amic, his *cursus honorum*, his eventful family life, see: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Séparation et pension alimentaire à Toulouse au XV^e siècle", *Séparation, divorce, répudiation: la rupture du lien Conjugal dans l'occident médiéval*, Emmanuelle Sontinelli, Régine Le Jan, eds. Valenciennes: Presses Universitaires de Valenciennes, 2007: 217-240.



It was this aristocratisation of lifestyle⁴⁰ which bore witness best to this objective which was, at the same time, an inexorable way to gain access to the life of a noble, (so at least a nobility in practice), if not official nobility. I shall put forward here a synthesis of the lines and results of my research on material culture which the reader can consult in detail in various thematic publications.⁴¹

How they lived first of all.⁴² In more than fifty inventories drawn up after death, fifteen luxurious houses stand out, and only around ten of the residences belonged to these high-ranking citizens who had been, at one time or another, members of *Capitoulat*. The inventories of these big town houses all mention the same characteristics: certain fittings, objects and suites were only to be found in this handful of ten or so houses. The word used for these houses by the notary is revealing: they are called *hospicium*, *hostal*, *hospicium magnum* and not just a simple *domus*. These properties stood out from the others both because of their size but also because of their quality. There were a large number of rooms organized around a courtyard, which was entered by a gate and a corridor. The town house was divided into several main buildings, often had stables, a well and an orchard. Occasionally it enclosed shops which could be rented; the tower, sometimes just a tower staircase, sometimes big enough to be furnished and lived in, overlooked the road and the neighbourhood. A high-ranking citizen's town house stood out in the urban landscape and left its mark on it both visually and topographically.

Other elements underlined its quality. First of all the decoration; it was on display outside, on the parts of the house that were visible and public: there were doorways and keystones both bearing coats of arms, façades looking out onto the road or courtyard with twin gothic windows, embellished with carved or painted decorations.⁴³ This decoration could also be as well finished in the rooms in which the more private family life took place, although until now only one painted decoration has been found in a secular house in Toulouse.⁴⁴ The specialized use of the rooms is also one of the criteria which shows the historian or the archeologist that he is in the 'right sort of house': the bedrooms are fitted out with a wardrobe, any reference to a separate kitchen is above all a very clear sign of distinction, or the presence of a chapel, found for the time being in just one inventory, in the house

40. Be careful: do not forget this is on the scale of the town of Toulouse!

41. See note 14 and those following. Apart from my own publications on the culture and material life in Toulouse, one can refer to the excellent synthesis drawn up by archeologists and art historians: Catalo, Jean; Cazes, Quitterie, eds. *Toulouse au Moyen Âge. 1000 ans d'histoire urbaine*. Carbonne: Loubatières, 2010.

42. See for example Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Entre Toulouse et Toulousain...": 235-259; Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Les élites toulousaines...": 40-61; Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Décor, parure et couleurs...": 285-315 (articles referred to in note 5).

43. This is the case for the gothic house situated 15 rue Croix-Baragnon, see: Napoléone, Anne-Laure; Testard, Olivier. "Etude archéologique des élévations de la maison n°15 rue Croix-Baragnon à Toulouse". *Archéologie Médiévale*, 29 (1999): 145-168; revised and with photographs in: Catalo, Jean; Cazes, Quitterie, eds. *Toulouse au Moyen Âge. 1000 ans d'histoire urbaine*. Carbonne: Loubatières, 2010:187-189.

44. Catalo, Jean; Cazes, Quitterie, eds. *Toulouse au Moyen Âge. 1000 ans d'histoire urbaine*. Carbonne: Loubatières, 2010: 187-189.



of the noble Bertrand Tornier.⁴⁵ Finally, certain dispositions concerning comfort are only to be found in these beautiful houses: numerous fireplaces, an abundance of different ways of lighting, commodes or latrines, tubs for having a bath, and refined toilet accessories ...⁴⁶

Attached to the big town houses in Toulouse, they added *bories* (metairies) in the country, even small country manors or strongholds (*castrum*, *fortalicium*), the seats of the seigneurie or coseigneurie. They liked staying or hunting there, but these houses and their fields also provided them with rent and supplies (corn, wine, poultry, *mises en gasaille* or lease of livestock).⁴⁷

In these luxurious town houses in Toulouse, the suites of furniture were way above average, as regards not only quantity but quality. They differed because of the quality of the kinds of wood used for the different pieces of furniture, the presence of chests and above all of numerous small painted caskets, covered in embossed leather, mounted with iron and with a lock. The furniture was refined and came in suites: in the hall (*aula*), these suites were made up of a table (sometimes permanent), large benches, one or two *cathèdres* (big wooden chairs), and a dresser. In the bedrooms there were huge beds with curtains and canopies, surrounded by chests and small permanent tables which were used as dressing tables or writing desks.⁴⁸

The decoration of the table was also a sign of social renown and that someone was a member of the town's elite. The plates and dishes were made of pewter at least, with complete dinner services (bowls, dishes, cups and goblets, and ewers ...), but there were also some things made of silver or silver gilt (spoons, cups and goblets ...).⁴⁹

45. See the publications quoted in the previous notes. This man, who died in 1402, was a dignitary in Toulouse, whose family fortune came from money-changing. Added to this there were purchases of seigneuries, ennoblement and regular attendance at the *Capitoulat* and in the influential services and circles in Toulouse ... At the beginning of the 15th century, Bertrand Tornier exhibited his nobility and chivalry, vaunted his fortune and adopted all the manners and behaviour of a noble and high-ranking citizen, which did not stop him from carrying on, very discreetly, his money-changing activities or from having family and even financial problems. His dubious succession put an end to the influence of his direct descendants even if other Torniers were to replace them at the *Capitoulat*.

46. For these permanent fixtures, the number and the specialized use of the rooms, the dispositions concerning comfort, see in particular: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Décor, parure et couleurs...": 286-290, 296-297.

47. Storage space in these town houses belonging to the same families in Toulouse mention food reserves or stocks of raw material (wood for example) which came from the surrounding countryside. The registers of family accounts, kept by the master of the household, or the acts signed in the presence of a notary, prove this constant movement back and forth between houses and seigneuries in the country and town houses...

48. For details about the furniture, see my synthesis: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Décor, parure et couleurs...": 290-296.

49. Refer to: Marandet, Marie-Claude. "L'équipement de la cuisine en Toulousain à la fin du Moyen Âge d'après les inventaires et les testaments". *Archéologie du Midi Médiéval*, 15-16 (1997-1998): 269-286. I studied the sets of plates and dishes in: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Décor, parure et couleurs...": 297-299; Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Quel luxe dans l'habitat civil toulousain des XIV^e et XV^e siècles? Les ambiguïtés de l'orfèvrerie", *Mercados del lujo, mercados del arte. El gusto de las élites mediterráneas en los siglos*



Textiles also contributed to the finery of the house. In the chests, there were impressive piles of linen passed on from one generation to the next; there was table linen (damask tableclothes, *touailles*, *longières* — various kinds of napkins), bed linen (finely-woven sheets and coarser ones, sometimes embroidered with silk thread, counterpanes with different coloured stripes, beautiful silk ones sometimes with the coat of arms on, or sometimes made specifically for the cots), but there were also matching hangings (bed curtains and canopies, wall hangings, bench covers known as *bancals* or *banquale*, fireguards with a textile inlay...), precious cushions... This linen, the bed linen in particular or the hangings adorning the walls or spread over the benches, often had coats of arms embroidered on it, especially the bench covers and certain very luxurious cot and bed counterpanes ... All this was stored and handed down from one generation to the next: its bad state of repair, its wear and tear but also the coats of arms of people from previous generations proved this.

Before the 1440's, I have not found any mention made of tapestries for secular houses and only about ten properties were adorned with embroidered or painted hangings, which imitated and replaced tapestries as they were far too expensive for the high-ranking citizens in Toulouse. These painted canvases, sometimes of very large dimensions, (in general 2.50m x 3.50m), mainly depicted religious subjects, (the Virgin Mary, the Crucifixion, and Saints), but also secular ones, (the Fountain of Youth, plant or animal motifs, such as rabbits in the middle of the vines, birds in trees, reeds, roses ...), and coats of arms...⁵⁰

Finally, in these houses, because they were vast and well-furnished, the high-ranking citizens in Toulouse could appreciate what most people in Toulouse could not experience: privacy. The different spaces, the objects the men and women of the house possessed, and which were clearly theirs, show the birth of privacy, of space and the personal object, in a word of private life.

The same refinement was to be found when they left their residences, in the way they dressed and decked themselves out. The men and women from the circle of high-ranking citizens in Toulouse wore clothing that was more expensive than that of the average person in the town. The cloth was better woven, enhanced by contrasting colours and played with the textures of materials, linings and fur. The people wore jewelry and lavish belts... The men carried daggers and swords, sometimes finely fashioned like the scabbards and sheaths in which they were carried.⁵¹

More broadly speaking, the high-ranking citizens in Toulouse showed they had a certain culture and manners in common. The men, for example, had to be able to prove that they took part in military activities and liked hunting. In adequation

XIV y XV, Juan Vicente García Marsilla, Sophie Brouquet, eds. Valencia: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2015: 333-357.

50. Concerning the textile decoration of the big town houses in Toulouse, see my first approach in: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Décor, parure et couleurs...": 299-315 and my recent contribution (2012): Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Tentures et textiles dans l'habitat...": 75-85 (referred to in note 5).

51. See my work: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Paraître et pouvoir: vêtue et parure...": 489-527 (referred to in note 5).



with their title of Squire or Knight, they had arms, sometimes even a complete set of knight's weapons as well as one of the men at arms who served them.⁵² They also had hunting dogs trained after establishing a contract for this in the presence of a notary,⁵³ and possessed horns, spears and knives 'for the hunt' ... The model of chivalry and nobility is obvious here. It was perfectly well assimilated, especially by those who had been made a noble relatively recently.

Reading books and writing was another facet of the behaviour they had in common. It shows the culture and expertise, namely judicial, of some of these high-ranking citizens. In all the houses, both men and women had Books of Hours, with precious bindings, carried in finely worked mesh-bags that could be hung from their belts. Grammar and law books proved that they had been to or went to Schools and the University of Toulouse, which had been a centre for the teaching of law since the 13th century. Encyclopedias, treaties and novels enabled them to acquire knowledge and to enjoy themselves; these works were often translated into *romanz*, which goes to prove that they were indeed read by the people who owned them. This raises the problem of diglossia among the elite, as they understood and used latin in their studies and their exercise of power, but spoke and read the *langue d'oc*. Moreover, some of them took part in the *Jeux Floraux* or *Gaie Science*, poetic contests founded in 1323, which helped to keep alive, or at least already commemorated, even imitated, the poetry of the past written in the dialects of the *langue d'oc*. In the bedrooms, especially the men's bedrooms, there were writing desks on which inventories were made of the caskets which contained the *instrumenta*, papers, account books, and all the writing necessities, (ivory boards covered in wax, styluses...), and above all the seal hanging on a silver chain. Knowledge, judicial or even financial competence, made access to royal offices or municipal functions possible or easier. The mastery of a written and technical culture brought together these different kinds of men in another dimension of urban domination.⁵⁴

52. This was the case for Bertrand Tornier, see the detail of this equipment, published and commented on, in: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Paraître et pouvoir: vêtue et parure...": 511-515, 524-526.

53. These training contracts will be published in: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Des animaux et des hommes à Toulouse à la fin du Moyen Âge", *De toutes natures de bestes. Décirer et connaître les animaux (milieu XIVe-fin XVIe siècle)*, Journées d'étude (Lacommade-Pau, 14-15 juin 2012) (forthcoming), organized by the Musée National du Château de Pau.

54. I have brought together all the examples in: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Lire et écrire chez...": 145-162 (see note 5). In order to understand the relationship between books and cultural life in Toulouse at the end of the Middle Ages better, it is useful to consult the work: Cassagnes-Brouquet, Sophie; Fournié, Michelle, eds. *Le livre dans la région toulousaine et ailleurs à la fin du Moyen Âge*. Toulouse: Éditions Méridiennes, 2010. For the turning point between the 15th and 16th century, apart from the seminars and publications directed by Nathalie Dauvois (Dauvois, Nathalie, ed. *L'Humanisme à Toulouse...*), the two study days organized by Amaia Arizaleta and Luis Gonzalez on the beginnings of the printing press and hispanic books in Toulouse (Arizaleta, Amaia; González Fernández, Luis. "Introducción". *Atalaya. Revue d'études médiévales romanes*. 13 December 2013, *Atalaya*, 13. 27 June 2014 <<http://atalaya.revues.org/1106>>). The papers presented at the first meeting are published in: Arizaleta, Amaia; González Fernández, Luis, eds. "Dossier Semyr". *Atalaya. Revue d'études médiévales romanes*. 13 December 2013, *Atalaya*, 13. 27 June 2014 <<http://atalaya.revues.org/868>>.



Apart from their culture, these high-ranking citizens made a point of displaying their orthodoxy and showed how pious they were. In their houses they had Books of Hours, and rosaries, both of which they carried with great ostentation to go to mass. They also had some *agnus Dei*, reliquaries, and objects of piety but above all, and only in those ten or so aforementioned houses, there were religious paintings, which I have already referred to, hanging on the bedroom walls, in rooms and in the porches where visitors were met. These men and women attended the religious confraternities in Toulouse which were very much in the public eye and which brought together the high-ranking citizens. They went in particular to the one attached to Saint-Sernin, the powerful confraternity of the *Corps Saints*. Studies have shown that the young, high-ranking citizens learnt all about administration there, and the older ones spent an active retirement there after years spent in the service of their businesses, of the *Capitoulat*, the King, and *Parlement*...⁵⁵

A large staff of servants finishes off the picture of the notability (wet nurses, valets and servants, clerks, tutors for the children, middlemen and *famuli* for the merchants...) as well as, everywhere and for everyone, the extensive use of coats of arms.⁵⁶

On the scale of Toulouse in the 14th and 15th century, one can therefore talk about the aristocratisation of lifestyle, of material elements which were all signs of notability, either under construction or established, and finally of the setting up of a *habitus*⁵⁷ which the elite in Toulouse had in common and reproduced from then on.

5. Conclusion

Through the different registers of discourse, but also through their behaviour and conduct, the high-ranking citizens of Toulouse, in spite of the fact they were so diverse and heterogeneous, joined together, and in doing so formed a political and social body which wanted to be and presented itself as being homogeneous and coherent, whereas this was not the case, as can be seen thanks to the differences in wealth shown in the tax records, the *Estimes*.⁵⁸ The group presented itself and

55. For more detail, see my publication: Lamazou-Duplan, Véronique. "Piété et croyances du privé...": 323-339. On piety and the confraternities in Toulouse, refer to the work of Michelle Fournié and her students mentioned in note 16 (Fournié, Michelle, ed. *Saint-Sernin de Toulouse...*; Dubreil-Arcin, Agnès. *Vies de saints...*; Foissac, Patrice. *Histoire des collèges de Cahors...*).

56. As a reminder, as I have already talked about it, there were coats of arms on personal objects (masculine seals on weapons), on certain pieces of the table service (cups, knives, goblets...), on the hangings in the houses (embroidered or painted coats of arms on the bed curtains, the counterpanes on the beds or cots, the bench covers and cushions and on the wall hangings...), on the finery (for example on the mesh bags which contained the Books of Hours), on the stone gateways of the houses, the cornerstones and the façades (there was a historiated frieze with escutcheons 15 rue Croix-Baragnon), and no doubt on the painted walls inside the houses ...

57. Bourdieu, Pierre. *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique*. Paris: Seuil, 2000: 174-189 (the first edition was published in 1972).

58. Wolff, Philippe. *Les "estimes" toulousaines...*



was represented as having a consensual identity, as the men had portraits made of themselves assembled together so as to govern the town (well). Yet nothing was further from the truth as the facts show political divisions, and rival clans; this was very common in Toulouse at the beginning of the 15th century for example.

However, the keys to these codes and values brought together by this group drew on the melting pot and the past in Toulouse, the memory of which was conserved in the capitular circles, first of all by administrative memory and then by the writing of history.⁵⁹ These codes drew on the reminiscences of chivalry in Toulouse and of an urban culture which had already died away (chivalry in Toulouse of the time of the counts and the Crusade in the 13th century, and literature written in the dialects of the *langue d'oc* which people did their utmost to use in the poetic contests rewarded by violets awarded by the *capitouls*). Yet the values of chivalry and courtesy were then considered as nobiliary values, a nobility which served as a model, more than as an ultimate criteria, and which one could enter in many different ways. The glorious past of Toulouse also re-appeared in the piety maintained by the considerable number of relics conserved in Saint-Sernin basilica by prestigious, powerful confraternities which the same men were members of. Some of them had been together at the Schools in Toulouse, and at the University.

So in spite of their social diversity and their difference, these men managed to establish the cohesion of the group of people in authority, the identity of the group of high-ranking citizens, in the exercise of power, through words and images and by adopting codes of values and everyday behaviour in common.

Were the difficulties of the time an obstacle? Nothing is less certain. The constant mechanisms of the renewal of the elite, because of the economic and political context in the 14th and 15th centuries, no doubt made the creation of a common identity an absolute necessity so that the group of people in authority in Toulouse could continue to govern the town. The confrontation with royal power, which little by little ate away at local government, no doubt helped to federate and coalesce these extremely different men and these common signs of notability, and of an urban culture and identity in Toulouse which claimed a *libertas* which was more and more out of touch with the facts.

Finally, from the middle of the 15th century, one cannot help but notice that the medieval categories (*miles*, *burgenses*, *cives*), gradually made room for the *capitouls* and the high-ranking citizens in Toulouse, called *domini*, *magnati*, bourgeois and nobles. These men had in common their eminent position in the hierarchy of Toulouse, privileges obtained thanks to the collective or collegial exercise of power and numerous elements accumulated during their own individual course in life.

59. On the links between administrative memory (including that of the urban accounts), *universitas*, urban history and memory, see the work of François Bordes on Toulouse already referred to (Bordes, François. *Formes et enjeux...*), by Pierre Chastang on Montpellier (Chastang, Pierre. *La ville, le gouvernement...*: 185-227) but also the ideas of Florent Garnier (Garnier, Florent. "Livres de comptes, mémoire et identité urbaine dans le Midi de la France au Moyen Âge", *Les identités urbaines au Moyen Âge: regards sur les villes du Midi français. Actes du colloque de Montpellier (8-9 décembre 2011)*, Patrick Gilli, Enrica Salvatori, eds. Turnhout: Brepols, 2014: 21-39).



THE MONASTIC WALES PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

The religious houses of medieval Wales, along with the Norman and native Welsh castles, form an important part of the country's medieval heritage. The *Monastic Wales Project*, launched in 2009, aims to explore how medieval monasteries have helped shape modern society, provide a platform for research on Wales's medieval monastic sites, as well as facilitate informed visits to the medieval monastic sites of Wales. This article presents the *Monastic Wales Project* in its context within the heritage industry, heritage management projects and historical societies in Wales from the 18th century to the present day. It introduces the project's aims, its website and publications, the activities of its members, and its contribution to conscientious tourism in Wales.¹

KEYWORDS

Wales, Monasticism, Conquest, Digital humanities, Heritage.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Walliae, Monachismus, Conquista, Digitales humanitates, Patrimonium.

The medieval heritage of Wales is —along with its spectacular mountains and its rugged coastline— one of its greatest attractions. The dramatic ruins of the Edwardian castles and the romantic remains of the religious houses have stirred the imagination of locals, travellers and artists for centuries.² They are testimony to a turbulent past. Wales is a distinctive place, in many ways very different from its neighbour to the east, England, though the histories of both entities have been intimately linked for many centuries. Medieval Wales was a fragmented country. Though some of its elite leaders might aspire to the title of ‘King of Wales’ or ‘Prince of Wales’, there was no concept of a country united by anything more than transient personal power and political aspirations.³ In reality medieval Wales, both before and after the first arrival, in the late 11th century, of the Normans, who moved westwards from their power bases in England, was a land of territorial powers under local leaders. The boundaries of principalities such as Gwynedd, Powys, Ceredigion, and Deheubarth, shifted and re-formed with the changing fortunes of their leaders. Under Rhys ap Gruffudd (the Lord Rhys), for instance, the lordship of Deheubarth in south west Wales was a powerful political force in the late 12th century, but by the 13th century this dominance had passed to Gwynedd in north-west Wales. For two centuries, from the late 11th to the late 13th century, the Norman and English kings were suspicious of their neighbours to the west. What the followers of King William I of England began in 1069 —the infiltration of Welsh territories and the establishment of their own political dominance— the armies of Edward I completed by 1284. From that date Wales came fully under English rule, its native rulers removed from power and its elite destroyed. It was not, however, until a series of acts of the English Parliament in the 1530s, known collectively as the Act of Union, that Wales was brought fully into the legal and administrative system of England. Despite this, and despite regional differences within the country, Wales has remained conscious of its distinctive heritage, its language, and its cultural traditions. This has been expressed by political movements striving in some cases for independence from England, or for a greater degree of self-determination, the latter achieved in some measure by political devolution in the 1990s and still a matter for debate. The history of interest in Wales’s medieval heritage is discussed below, but first a few words should be said about the way in which the landscape of Wales still reflects its turbulent medieval past.

1. The authors would like to acknowledge the support of the research project *Auctoritas. Iglesia, cultura y poder, siglos XII-XV* (HAR2012-31484), funded by the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness of the Government of Spain.

2. The ruins of the Cistercian abbey of Tintern, for instance, inspired the poet William Wordsworth and the artist William Turner. See: Robinson, David. *The Cistercians in Wales: Architecture and Archaeology 1130-1540*. (Society of Antiquaries of London, Research Committee Report). London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 2006: 286.

3. Davies, John. *A History of Wales*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1993; Carr, Anthony D. *Medieval Wales*. New York: St Martin’s Press, 1995; Davies, Rees R. *The Age of Conquest. Wales 1063-1415*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987. It is worth mentioning that John Davies’s monumental *History of Wales* was originally published in 1990 in the Welsh language as *Hanes Cymru*, the first book ever to be published in Welsh by Penguin Books. The English translation was published three years later.



1. A land of castles and monasteries

The stone castle was an obvious marker of political infiltration and dominance. The coming of the Normans was accompanied by the building of castles, one of the earliest being Chepstow on the banks of the River Wye, constructed by William fitz Osbern, who had been sent by William I to conquer what he could of Wales and to keep its borders. As the Normans marched westwards, so they constructed more castles to demonstrate their presence and their power. From a base on the English side of the River Severn at Shrewsbury the Montgomerys marched west across mid Wales and then south, establishing fortifications as they went. The Welsh, too, constructed their strongholds, and the final destruction of Welsh independence is marked by a series of showpieces, the Edwardian castles of north Wales, which are now a magnet for tourists. Perhaps less obviously the transformation of the ecclesiastical institutions of Wales was also a tool of the imposition of alien power. The medieval Welsh church has sometimes been described as an old-fashioned institution that ‘cannot be described as a power-house of spiritual activity’.⁴ While this may be arguable, what seems certain is that when the Normans began their invasion and settlement of Wales in the late 11th century, they found the native church, and native monasticism, in many ways unfamiliar to continental, and English, practice. Along with the castles they built on their newly-conquered Welsh lands, the Norman settlers began establishing monasteries that were directly affiliated to their existing Benedictine foundations in England and France, and thereby brought Wales into line with monastic practice in continental Europe.⁵ So it was that William fitz Osbern drew monks from his family monastery of Corneilles in Normandy to staff a Benedictine priory at Chepstow, which faces the castle that he constructed across a wide market place.⁶ When Arnulf of Montgomery marched from Shrewsbury across mid Wales and south into Pembrokeshire he settled at Pembroke, building a castle that still dominates the town, and a Benedictine priory. He is recorded as standing in the chapter house of his family monastery at Séz in the year 1098 affirming his grant to the abbey of the church of St Nicholas of Pembroke, which he made in memory of his father Roger and of his brother, Hugh, who had been killed that year.⁷ The new stone priories of south Wales were thus a symbol of a new ruling elite in the same way as its castles. Along with Benedictine monasticism the Normans also introduced new ecclesiastical structures, new liturgical practices and new architectural styles into Wales.

4. Carr, Anthony D. *Medieval Wales...*: 49.

5. For the foundation of the Benedictine houses of south Wales and their link with conquest see: Burton, Janet. “Transition and transformation: the Benedictine houses”, *Monastic Wales: New Approaches*, Janet Burton, Karen Stöber, eds. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013: 21-37.

6. Shoesmith, Ron. “Chepstow Town, Priory and Port Wall”, *Chepstow Castle: its History and Buildings*, Rick Turner, Andy Johnson, eds. Logaston: Logaston Press, 2006: 199-212.

7. *Calendar of Documents Preserved in France, Illustrative of the History of Great Britain and Ireland. Vol. I. AD 918-1206*, ed. John Horace Round. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1899: 237-238.



The incomers also brought in the reformed orders of the 12th century, and were responsible for the introduction of the Tironensians to St Dogmaels on the west coast of Wales at the estuary of the River Teifi, the Savigniacs to Basingwerk in the north-east and Neath in the south, and the Cistercians, first to Tintern, which was located on the River Wye not many miles from Chepstow. The Anglo-Norman elite did not, however, have a monopoly on the patronage of the new orders. From the mid-1160s native rulers discovered, first in the Cistercians and then in the Augustinian canons, worthy recipients for their benefactions. Beginning with the Lord Rhys's adoption of the nascent Cistercian community at Strata Florida in mid Wales (1165), founded only the year before by the Norman lord of Cardigan Castle, Welsh rulers established, endowed, and patronized Cistercian houses, attracted by a combination of factors: the reputation of the White Monks for austerity, their lack of dependence on English and Norman or French mother houses (which so distinguished the Welsh Benedictine priories), and the pan-European nature of the order. The Cistercian houses under Welsh patronage, however, were more than places of prayer and worship: they became inextricably linked to the cultural and political ambitions of the native rulers.

The medieval monasteries of Wales are part of the heritage of Wales today. The choice of location for these houses also seems to have been linked to heritage in a different way. In several cases new monastic foundations were made on the sites of earlier or existing religious communities. Incised stones found near the site of the Benedictine priory of Ewenny and the Cistercian abbey of Margam suggest that the Norman founders may have sought to transform sites of cultural or religious significance in a form of cultural appropriation.⁸ Archaeological investigation at Strata Florida is suggesting more and more that there were ecclesiastical antecedents at the site, while the placement of Valle Crucis near the ninth-century Pillar of Eliseg, commemorating local political Welsh dominance, must also have been significant. Are we here seeing native rulers using the Cistercians as custodians of their Welsh past? Valle Crucis was the last Cistercian foundation by a native Welsh ruler (1201).⁹ In the 13th century the rulers of Gwynedd in particular diverted their patronage in the direction of the Augustinian canons. Llywelyn ab Iorwerth (died in 1240) and his successors used the canons to colonize existing houses of Culdees (eremitical groups) and *clas* churches (mother churches serving a wide area). Here we may see the transformation of a Welsh traditional church and monastic structure along with continuity of the religious significance of these sites, as part of the political strategies of an aspirant ruler.¹⁰

8. For Ewenny see, for instance: Burton, Janet. "Transition and Transformation...": 21-37. On Margam: Robinson, David. *Cistercians in Wales...*: 253-261.

9. On Valle Crucis, see: Burton, Janet; Stöber, Karen. *Abbeys and Priories of Medieval Wales*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015: 213-217.

10. Stöber, Karen; Austin, David. "Culdees to Canons: the Augustinian Houses of North Wales", *Monastic Wales: New Approaches*, Janet Burton, Karen Stöber, eds. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013: 39-54.



2. Wales and its heritage

How, then, has Wales seen its medieval past, in particular its monastic houses? Ever since, from the 18th century onwards, the nationalist impulse reawakened an interest in the remains of a great, heroic Middle Age, when Wales was a land of myths and heroes, the medieval heritage has been the focus of historians, archaeologists, and antiquarians. Great demographic, economic and cultural changes affected Wales between the mid-19th century and the First World War,¹¹ a period that was in many ways a peak time for scholarly activity of nationalist slant.

The 18th century saw the emergence of interest in all things Welsh, an interest that extended beyond Offa's Dyke (the earthwork that marked the boundary between the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia and the Welsh)¹² and gathered speed during the following century. Among the most notable by-products of this newly-roused Welsh nationalism were the promotion of the Welsh language, and the appearance of scholarly societies devoted to Welsh history and culture. One of the first of these, the *Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, was founded in London in 1751 with the purpose of 'defending the purity of the Welsh language, stimulating interest in the history and literature of Wales, and promoting economic and scientific ventures beneficial to Wales'.¹³ It was refounded on two occasions, in the first and second half of the 19th century respectively, and it continues to this day. An important aspect of this, and later, societies was the publication of a journal. The *Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* was, moreover, instrumental in promoting Welsh culture in a number of other ways, including its support of the creation of what was to become the University of Aberystwyth, in 1872, and by helping to establish the modern *eisteddfodau*, annual cultural gatherings that celebrate Welsh literature, music and poetry and that have their remote (and perhaps imagined) origins in the 12th century, and that have been celebrated annually in different parts of Wales ever since the mid-19th century.¹⁴ The new-found Welsh consciousness also expressed itself in the adoption of the song *Hen Wlad fy Nhadau* ("Ancient Land of my Fathers"), composed in 1856, as national anthem of the Welsh people.¹⁵

The *Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* aside, throughout the 19th century local history societies were springing up across the different parts of Wales. They had the aim of raising people's awareness of their local history and heritage and contribute to their 'cultural awakening' by means of more or less regular meetings of varying

11. Davies, John. *A History of Wales*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1993: 398-400.

12. The word 'Welsh' is of Anglo-Saxon origin and means 'foreigner'; it was used by the Anglo-Saxons of the folk living in what the English call Wales. The Welsh words are *Cymru* ("Wales") and *Cymraeg* ("Welsh").

13. Davies, John. *A History of Wales...*: 305.

14. The first post-medieval *National Eisteddfod* was held in 1861 in the southern Welsh town of Aberdare. Davies, John. *A History of Wales...*: 416. On the Welsh *eisteddfodau* see also: Morgan, Prys. "From a Death to a View: The Hunt for the Welsh Past in the Romantic Period", *The Invention of Tradition*, Eric Hobsbawm, Terence Ranger, eds. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1983: 43-100.

15. Davies, John. *A History of Wales...*: 417.



frequency.¹⁶ Many local history societies —some with greater scholarly credentials than others— founded in the 19th century have continued to this day; in most cases they have journals that are published annually, and some hold seminar series. The *Welsh Manuscripts Society*, for example, was established in Abergavenny in 1837; the *Powysland Club* was founded in 1867 in Montgomeryshire in mid Wales; and the *Cymdeithas Hanes Ceredigion* (“Ceredigion Historical Society”) was founded in 1909 (as the *Cardiganshire Antiquarian Society*). The directors of the *Monastic Wales Project* have frequently been invited to give lectures to local history societies over the past few years, including the *Powysland Club*, and the *Ceredigion Historical Society*, as well as at the different academic institutions of Wales, among them the University of Bangor and Cardiff University.

The growing interest in the language, literature, and culture of Wales, promoted and popularised by the history societies, was mirrored by increasing attention paid to its architectural heritage. The dramatic ruins of the Edwardian castles of north Wales, and of the grand Cistercian abbeys of the south, began to excite increasingly professional attention. By the mid-19th century the *Cambrian Archaeological Association* had been established and held its first meeting in Aberystwyth in September 1847. One of the first projects of the association had a monastic target: as early as 1848 the ruins of Strata Florida Abbey caught the imagination of Stephen Williams, member of the *Cambrian Archaeological Association* and railway engineer, involved in surveying Ceredigion for the construction of a railway line in west Wales (which was to be realised later in the century). It was Williams who was responsible for the first large-scale excavation at Strata Florida Abbey in 1887-1890, in some ways initiating a new phase of what we might now refer to as ‘heritage management’ in Wales.¹⁷ Williams was also in charge of the excavations at two further Cistercian monasteries in Wales, Abbey Cwmhir (in 1890) and Strata Marcella (also in 1890). Excavations at the Premonstratensian abbey of Talley were carried out between 1892 and 1894 at the behest of Sir James William Drummond. More recently, excavations at different monastic sites across Wales have been led by archaeologists from different institutions, such as the Cistercian abbey of Whitland,¹⁸ and the Franciscan friary at Carmarthen.¹⁹ Perhaps the most significant of these is the ongoing work at Strata Florida Abbey in Ceredigion, led by Professor David Austin from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David and his team, who are behind the *Strata Florida Project*. The findings of this important project are not only throwing new light on the creation of Cistercian precincts and the impact of the Cistercian order on medieval landscape,

16. Davies, John. *A History of Wales...*: 416.

17. Williams, Stephen. *The Cistercian Abbey of Strata Florida: its History and an Account of Recent Excavations made on the Site*. London: Whiting and Co., 1889.

18. For Whitland see: Ludlow, Neil. “Whitland Abbey, Carmarthenshire: a Cistercian site re-examined, 1994-99”. *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 151 (2002): 41-108. For a summary of recent archaeological work on monastic sites in Wales, see: Austin, David. “The Archaeology of Monasteries in Wales and the Strata Florida Project”, *Monastic Wales: New Approaches*, Janet Burton, Karen Stöber, eds. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013: 3-20.

19. James, Terrence. “Carmarthenshire’s religious houses: a review of recent archaeological work”. *Carmarthenshire Antiquary*, 36 (2000): 58-70.



but it moreover represents a major excavation and training site for archaeologists in Wales.²⁰

The beginning of the twentieth century saw the further professionalization and formalisation of the custody of Welsh patrimony, both architectural and documentary, with the establishment of the National Library of Wales (founded in Aberystwyth in March 1907 by royal charter) and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (established in 1908).

Inevitably, time has left its mark upon the ancient stones. Recent years have seen an increasing awareness of the need to preserve Wales's medieval heritage. With the creation of *Cadw* (a Welsh term meaning "to keep / to protect") in 1984, the Welsh government established a counterpart to the equivalent organisation in England, *English Heritage* (established in 1983 as the successor of the Ministry of Works). The year 1991 saw the foundation of Historic Scotland.²¹ *Cadw*, which describes itself as the 'official guardian of the built heritage of Wales', is custodian of a number of the Welsh medieval monastic sites that are part of the *Monastic Wales Project*.²² The project directors maintain contact with both *Cadw* and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, and are grateful to both these bodies for their support.

3. The Monastic Wales Project

The *Monastic Wales Project* —a non-profit endeavour— grew out of the desire of its founders to create a platform for the study of the monastic history of medieval Wales, to explain its historical context, to encourage further investigation of Wales's medieval monastic sites, and, finally, to explore how medieval monasteries have helped shape modern society. The *Monastic Wales Project* seeks to facilitate informed visits to the medieval monastic sites of Wales.

The monasteries of Wales have, of course, had their fair share of historians, both historians of the Welsh church in general and those, notably David Williams, who have made monasteries the focus of their research.²³ However, the *Monastic Wales Project* is the only attempt to date to work towards a comprehensive history of the monastic houses of medieval Wales, and to make its findings accessible in a variety of ways. It seeks, as its home page outlines, to raise the profile of the Welsh monasteries

20. See: Austin, David. "The Archaeology of Monasteries in Wales...": 3-20, especially, 10-16; see also: University of Wales Trinity Saint David. "Strata Florida: Place of History and Landscape". *The Strata Florida Project*. 9 June 2015 <<http://www.strataflorida.org.uk/>>.

21. See: Government of England. "English Heritage". *English Heritage*. 9 June 2015 <<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/>>; The Scottish Government. "Historic Scotland". *Historic Scotland*. 9 June 2015 <<http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/>>.

22. Welsh Government. "Cadw". *Historic Wales*. 9 June 2015 <<http://www.cadw.wales.gov.uk/>>.

23. See, for instance: Williams, David. *The Welsh Cistercians*. Leominster: Gracewing, 2001, which is an updated version of his earlier two volume work (Williams, David. *The Welsh Cistercians*. Caldey Island: Cistercian Publications, 1984) and many articles.



and to give them their rightful place in the history of the medieval church in western Christendom. It also charts how monasticism within Wales developed over time. Monasteries were important to medieval society in all sorts of ways. To be sure, in the four and a half centuries of their existence, they changed. For individual monks, canons, and nuns, life inside the cloister might have remained constant as they lived out their existence according to rules which were laid down centuries before, but as institutions monastic houses were subject to forces and pressures like any other. This was even more apparent in a society such as medieval Wales, which saw such dramatic and fundamental changes during the lifetime of its medieval monasteries.

Our story begins with the coming of the Normans to Wales, which, as outlined above, brought such radical changes to Welsh politics, church, and society. Monasticism itself was no new phenomenon in the Wales of the late 11th century, however, and the chronological parameters of the project require some explanation. At an early stage of our planning we were fortunate to gain two modest tranches of funding, the first was from University of Wales, Lampeter (now University of Wales Trinity Saint David) and the second from the Marc Fitch foundation.²⁴ This allowed us to secure the services of Nigel Callaghan of Technoleg Taliesin and Martin Crampin of the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies (*Canolfan Uwchefrydiau Cymreig a Cheltaidd*) in Aberystwyth, who designed the database and the webpages, and to employ Dr Julie Kerr as a research assistant, but it meant that we had also to be fairly modest in our ambitions and make sure that we could be reasonably certain to complete what we had planned. Although we were fully aware that what lay behind the monasteries of what we might call the ‘High Middle Ages’ was a rich and vibrant tradition that went back as far as the post-Roman period, we designated *Monastic Wales* as a project designed to cover the period from the coming of the Normans to the dissolution of the 16th century. However, the project does not neglect early medieval monasticism in Wales, and one aspect of the research of scholars on the *Monastic Wales* team is the issue of transition and transformation: how much the later tradition owed to the earlier in terms of the sites of monastic houses as well as their impact. But for practical reasons—and until we obtain more funding—*Monastic Wales* begins in the late 11th century with the imposition on parts of Wales of an alien aristocracy, and ends in the 1530s when King Henry VIII of England and his commissioners decided on the wholesale closure of the monastic houses of both England and Wales.

4. The *Monastic Wales* website (www.monasticwales.org): the project and its academic and non-academic audience

Determined by the funding awarded to the *Monastic Wales Project*, the first phase involved the creation of an interactive website, which was to serve a range of

24. We are grateful to the University and to the Marc Fitch fund for their support.



functions. The first of these was to bring together and make accessible the research carried out by scholars across the disciplines, most prominently among them history, archaeology, architectural and art history, and literary studies. The second was to identify primary documentary sources relevant to the religious communities of medieval Wales, in addition to a full bibliography of secondary works in the disciplines of history, archaeology, art and architecture, manuscript studies, visual culture, and literature, and thereby provide a useful tool for researchers. The third was to document (in a photographic database) the standing remains, site details, and any surviving artefacts of the Welsh monasteries, including items that are no longer *in situ*, or even in Wales (such as rood screens, fonts, tiles). At the time of writing this first phase of the project is complete—with the proviso that it is in the nature of such compilations of data that they are constantly being augmented and updated. One of the strengths of the project has been the interaction between the project team and volunteers, whether they be members of the public who have heard the directors speak at one of their numerous local lectures, or undergraduate and postgraduate students, who have added bibliographical references or contributed photographs to our ever expanding data bank of images.²⁵

In terms of the website the directors are now ready (once appropriate funding has been secured) to enhance the website further with digital innovation. The next step will be to create a teaching tool, with sections appropriate for use by school students at different educational stages / levels, raising their awareness of their local medieval and monastic heritage. A priority for this—and indeed for other sections of the website—will be translation into Welsh to make the site fully bilingual. Translation of some of the principal pages of the website is already underway.

The *Monastic Wales* website went live in 2009 and was launched at a joint event in Aberystwyth and Lampeter in October of that year to coincide with an international workshop on 'Monastic Wales'. At the time of its launch the website was still in its infancy, but it was the deliberate decision of the directors to raise the profile of the project at that early stage, in order to increase public awareness and participation. At that early stage the website comprised pages for some fifty monastic sites across Wales, including houses of Benedictine monks and nuns, Cistercian monks and nuns, Cluniac monks, Tironensian monks, Bonhommes, and Augustinian and Premonstratensian canons. In a second stage, further religious orders were added to the list: the houses of mendicant friars (the Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, and Austin friars) and the only foundation in Wales associated with the military orders, increasing the total number of monastic sites on the website to sixty. Each of the monasteries included on the website has an individual page which contains a schematic history of the house from its foundation to its dissolution; descriptions and photographs of the standing remains and any related artefacts; some practical information, such as access and ownership; a searchable list of people associated

25. We are grateful to a range of people who have contributed to the database of photographs, most especially Martin Crampin. Mention should also be made of postgraduate students at University of Wales: Trinity Saint David (Lampeter), notably Therron Welstead, Paul Watkins, Christopher Pearce, and Ian Bass.



with the site, be that in their capacity of founders or patrons, heads of the house, or secular as well as ecclesiastical authorities involved with the community in question; a list of archival sources with details of content and, where available, digital images; and a list of relevant bibliographical sources.

As well as information about sixty religious communities, the *Monastic Wales* website has a section on the different religious orders that were present in medieval Wales, a searchable database of people, an extensive glossary of terms, a comprehensive bibliography and list of archival material, and a section which contains scholarly articles written by members and collaborators of the *Monastic Wales Project* and which is being updated and expanded at regular intervals. At present the articles included in this section treat different religious orders (the Benedictines, Cistercians, Cluniacs, regular canons), an article on ‘transient’ religious houses in Wales, and a series of articles on the architectural remains of individual sites. The *Monastic Wales* website, moreover, has an interactive map marking all the monastic sites included, facilitating their localization. Finally, one very important element of the *Monastic Wales* website is its interactive function, facilitating direct contact with the project team and thereby enabling the participation of the public in the project.

The *Monastic Wales* website is regularly updated and expanded, making this very much a ‘living’ project that accumulates and incorporates new information as it becomes available, and raising awareness of our links with cognate projects and research elsewhere. Monthly statistics allow us to measure the number and provenance of visitors to the *Monastic Wales* website, which has registered users from across Europe (mostly from within the United Kingdom, but also from Ireland, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Scandinavia, and eastern Europe), as well as the United States and Australia. It is noticeable that significant visits to the website have been registered after the delivery of a lecture or conference paper.

5. *Monastic Wales*: scholarly research and publications

To date, the *Monastic Wales Project* has resulted in two major publications: first, the collection of scholarly essays entitled *Monastic Wales: New Approaches* was published by the University of Wales Press in March 2013.²⁶ This book brings together recent work of some of the most important scholars from different disciplines and different backgrounds currently working on aspects of monastic Wales. They include archaeologists, historians, literary scholars, and art historians, from Wales, England, and Ireland, and their aim is to ‘consider the history, archaeology, architecture and wider cultural, social, political and economic context of the religious houses of Wales between the Norman conquest in the 11th century and dissolution of the monasteries in the 16th century. This is our first step towards a comprehensive

26. Information from the back cover of: Burton, Janet; Stöber, Karen, eds. *Monastic Wales: New Approaches*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013.



history of monastic Wales. Professor Huw Pryce has called the book an “impressive collection of essays [that] makes an extremely valuable contribution to the study both of medieval Wales and medieval monasticism”. He continues:

No other volume provides such a wide-ranging picture of Welsh monastic history over the centuries from the coming of the Normans to the Reformation. Informed by the latest research, it demonstrates the impact of the monastic orders on all facets of Welsh society: from the economy to literature and book production, from politics to popular religion, in towns as well as in the countryside. Sensitive to both local contexts and European connections, the contributors add significantly to our understanding of the place of Wales in medieval Christendom.²⁷

The second publication, *Abbeys and Priories of Medieval Wales*, published in hardback and in paperback in February 2015, also by the University of Wales Press, is a guide to the religious houses of medieval Wales, providing a thorough introduction to monasticism, with special focus on Wales, followed by individual histories of each of Wales's almost sixty houses of monks, canons, friars, and nuns.²⁸ This book, which includes maps and other practical information, is both a scholarly history of Wales's medieval monastic heritage, and a practical visitor's guide for the general public. In addition to the usual outlets of bookshops it is marketed at heritage sites throughout Wales. The impact (both scholarly and non-academic) of these publications will continue to be demonstrated through book sales and citations in academic works.

6. Monastic Wales in its wider context

Monasticism was a universal, European wide, medieval experience and one that has always attracted, and continues to attract, widespread scholarly attention. The *Monastic Wales Project* has the support of a prestigious international advisory board, whose members are Dr Maureen Jurkowski (University College London), Dr Edel Bhreathnach (The Discovery Programme, Dublin), Professor Andrew Prescott (Glasgow University), Dr Anne Müller (University of Wales Trinity Saint David and project manager at the Monastery of Heidenheim), Professor Blanca Garí (University of Barcelona), Professor Dr Hedwig Röckelein (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen), and Professor Petr Sommer (Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Prague).

The *Monastic Wales Project* does not exist in isolation. On the contrary, it is a collaborative venture that benefits from, as well as inspires, other projects of similar nature. In the first instance, contacts were established with colleagues across the Irish Sea. This was in many ways a natural collaboration. Close links existed between Wales and Ireland during the medieval period, when two Welsh monasteries (Tintern

27. Pryce, Huw. *Monastic Wales: New Approaches*, Janet Burton, Karen Stöber, eds. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013: back cover.

28. Burton, Janet; Stöber, Karen. *Abbeys and Priories of Medieval Wales...* (Reprinted in paperback in November 2015).



Abbey, and Llanthony Priory) established daughter houses in Ireland. Moreover, monasticism in Ireland, as in Wales, exhibited some of the characteristics that arose from tensions between native and immigrant lordships. In 2011, therefore, the *Monastic Wales Project* team organised a workshop, held at the University of Wales: Trinity Saint David in Lampeter, which had its focus on establishing collaborative links between Monastic Wales and Ireland, and which was attended by colleagues from Dublin, Belfast, Cork, and Limerick. In the event, out of this initial meeting grew an independent research project, inspired by the *Monastic Wales Project* and closely related to it: the *Monastic Ireland Project*.²⁹ This new project, which is based at the Discovery Programme Ireland and Trinity College in Dublin, was launched in Dublin in December 2014 in the presence of the directors of the *Monastic Wales Project*. A further, similar, research project is presently at planning stage in Scotland. The *Monastic Scotland Project*, currently under discussion involving scholars from the universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling and St Andrews. Like its counterparts in Wales and Ireland, this project will emphasise interdisciplinarity and close collaboration with existing local heritage organisations, such as Historic Scotland. The *Monastic Wales Project* is maintaining close contact with the Scottish team.

The *Monastic Wales* directors are moreover closely involved as collaborators in a range of other monastic projects, most notably the *Strata Florida Project*, based at the University of Wales: Trinity Saint David and directed by Professor David Austin and Dr. Jemma Bezan, and the research project *Claustra. Atlas de Espiritualidad Femenina en los Reinos Peninsulares* (HAR2011-25127), directed by Professor Blanca Garí at the University of Barcelona, as well as the research project *Auctoritas. Iglesia, cultura y poder, siglos XII-XV* (HAR2012-31484), directed by Dr. Karen Stöber at the University of Lleida (both funded by the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness of the Government of Spain).

Finally, the *Monastic Wales* and *Strata Florida* projects were the joint instigators and organisers of the exploratory workshop *Monasteries in the Shadow of Empire*, held at the Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt in Germany in October 2013, which was awarded €12,000 by the European Science Foundation (EW12-069). This meeting brought together participants from Wales, Ireland, England, Spain, Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, Romania, Hungary, and Denmark, to explore the possibilities for an international, inter-disciplinary collaborative project on regional aspects of monasticism and state building, cultural communication and narrative, and the spatial impact of religious houses in the landscape.

7. *Monastic Wales and conscientious tourism*

Fostering ‘conscientious tourism’ is one of the key aims of the *Monastic Wales Project*. It seems clear that people treat historical patrimony differently when they

29. Monastic Ireland. “Welcome to Monastic Ireland”. *Monastic Ireland*. 9 June 2015 < <http://www.monastic.ie/>>.



have established a relation with it. In this sense, *Monastic Wales* not only targets tourism from further afield, but is simultaneously aimed at ‘internal tourism’, raising people’s consciousness of their local heritage. Putting the medieval Welsh heritage into its historical, but also its cultural, social and political context, helps people understand the wider significance of what might in some cases at first glance appear to the uninformed visitor simply as piles of old stone. It is therefore crucial for the preservation of the monastic heritage of Wales to initiate, through the provision of information, the process of understanding — appreciating — caring — maintaining — of the material remains of the abbeys and priories of medieval Wales. Furthermore, the *Monastic Wales* website provides the visitor with practical information beyond the immediate site of individual religious houses, by drawing their attention to the documentary sources kept in archives in Wales and beyond, and the seals that survive in some cases and are now at the National Library of Wales or the National Museum of Wales, or in archives outside Wales. And then there are those items of monastic provenance that are no longer *in situ*, such as the floor tiles from Neath Abbey and Basingwerk Abbey, now kept at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff; or the fine stone effigy of Siwan (Joan), the wife of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth (died in 1240), ruler of Gwynedd and patron of the Franciscan friary of Llanfaes in Gwynedd, now at Beaumaris parish church; or the capitals from Cwmhir Abbey, now at St Idloes church in Llanidloes; or the capital from a pier from Strata Marcella Abbey, which now functions as a baptismal font at Buttington parish church.³⁰

8. Case Studies

The following three case studies are examples of some aspects of the *Monastic Wales Project’s* role in raising the awareness of, and by extension promoting the maintenance and care of, Wales’s medieval heritage.

8.1 Strata Florida Abbey (Cistercian, Cardiganshire)³¹

The important Cistercian monastery of Strata Florida was a daughter house of Whitland Abbey, which in turn had been founded directly from France.³² Over

30. See: Burton, Janet; Stöber, Karen. *Abbeys and Priories of Medieval Wales...*: 115 (for Llanfaes), 196 (for Strata Marcella). See also: “Monastic Wales”. *Monastic Wales*. 9 June 2015 <<http://www.monasticwales.org/browsedb.php?func=showsite&siteID=26>> (for Abbey Cwmhir).

31. “Strata Florida (Abbey)”. *Monastic Wales*. 9 June 2015 <<http://www.monasticwales.org/site/32>>.

32. Traditionally Whitland Abbey has been counted as a daughter house of the abbey of Clairvaux. However, Benoit Tock has shown that the foundation history of Vaucelles Abbey in northern France claims to be the house from which Whitland was founded. See: Tock, Benoit. “Les fondations anglaise et galloise de l’abbaye de Vaucelles”. *Revue du Nord*, 391-392 (2011): 795-814.



time Strata Florida acquired great importance. Not only did it become the family monastery and dynastic mausoleum of the southern Welsh princes of Deheubarth; it moreover represents one of the most significant centres of cultural production of all the medieval Welsh monasteries. Its history is closely linked to the native Welsh princes, who on at least one occasion in the 13th century used the abbey for a political gathering, and in consequence also to the latter's hostile relationship with the English crown. Over the centuries, the Strata Florida monks repeatedly felt the repercussions of these hostilities, when their abbey was attacked by royal English troops or sympathisers of the English king, who went as far as abusing the monastic buildings for military purposes, as in the 15th century, when English soldiers stabled their horses in the abbey church. Despite its turbulent history, Strata Florida played a key role in the cultural life of medieval Wales and was instrumental in the production and preservation of native literature, both in Latin and in Welsh. Many of the most important Welsh literary manuscripts are attributed to its scriptorium, and it is also known that later heads of the abbey played a central role as patrons to some of the Welsh bards. Architecturally the monastery represents a fine example of the regional building style that has parallels in the West Country (England), but the spectacular west front of the abbey church represents a unique example in a Cistercian context. Strata Florida Abbey survived the first wave of monastic suppressions under King Henry VIII, but was eventually dissolved by royal order in February 1539. The remains of the abbey church and conventual buildings are now in the guardianship of *Cadw*, while the rest of the former monastic precinct is in private hands.

Strata Florida has always attracted the attention of scholars and local historians. It is among the most-discussed monasteries in Wales, but the resulting documentation about the abbey was dispersed, making the comprehensive treatment of the house difficult. The *Monastic Wales Project* has gathered together in one place all available information about Strata Florida Abbey, thereby allowing visitors to the website, easy access to the wide range of bibliographical material and facilitating further research, as well as offering a detailed outline of the abbey's history from its foundation to its suppression. The information presented schematically on the website has moreover been elaborated in the *Monastic Wales Project* publication *Abbeys and Priories of Medieval Wales*.³³ In the case of Strata Florida Abbey, the *Monastic Wales Project* has, as stated above, established close collaborative connections with colleagues from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's archaeological team and their *Strata Florida Project*.³⁴ The government organization, *Cadw*, is in charge of the ruins of the abbey church and the remaining part of the cloisters. *Cadw* has established a small museum and visitor centre on the site, where informative material, including a brief guidebook published by *Cadw* is available, as well as postcards and souvenirs. The display boards on the site and in the museum / reception area have recently been updated with information about the economic activities of the abbey in its

33. Burton, Janet; Stöber, Karen. *Abbeys and Priories of Medieval Wales...*: 187-193.

34. "Strata Florida". *Monastic Wales*. 9 June 2015 <http://www.strataflorida.org.uk>>.



landscape and environment which has emerged from recent investigation of the site by the *Strata Florida project*.

8.2 Llanthony Priory (Augustinian, Monmouthshire)

Llanthony Priory was the first house of Augustinian canons to be established in Wales. Its foundation dates back to the beginning of the 12th century and has its origins in a hermitage set deep in the Black Mountains on the borders of Wales and England.

The priory, which had a turbulent history, being drawn into the social unrest that affected the border region during different time throughout its history, was an important religious centre until its suppression in 1538 at the hands of the English crown during the dissolution of the monasteries. At its closure, its lands and possessions came into the hand of a member of the royal (English) household, and it has remained in private hands ever since. Today the dramatic ruins of Llanthony Priory are among the most picturesque in Wales. Set in farmland among the bare hills of the Black Mountain range, the former monastic complex now forms part of a working farm, which offers pony trekking excursions. Parts of the medieval buildings now house a privately-owned hotel and restaurant. The present owners of the site draw heavily on its medieval heritage, as a look at their website suggests, which states that:

the Hotel dates back to the 12th century and was originally part of Llanthony Priory which was built by Augustinian monks [sic]. A visit to the Hotel is like stepping back in time, as the building is very much the same today as it was when it was built, with its narrow spiral stair way leading to each of the four bedrooms situated in the tower, its magnificent dining room, which originally served as the prior's outer parlour and conference room and the bar, possibly once the prior's quarters.³⁵

Also on the Llanthony Priory Hotel website are a brief summary of the priory's history, and a photographic tour of the site. Visitors to Llanthony are granted free and unrestricted access to the monastic ruins, which now offer a splendid location for the many car-tourists, walkers, cyclists and horse-riders that pass through the valley. At the site, explanatory panels provide basic information about Llanthony's history and about the appearance of some of its buildings during the medieval period.

Beyond this basic provision of information, the visitor can turn to the *Monastic Wales Project* website, or to the published monastery guide.³⁶ Here, all the available information on the priory, gathered together from a wide range of archival sources

35. Llanthony Priory Hotel. 9 June 2015 <<http://www.llanthonyprioryhotel.co.uk/>>.

36. "Llanthony Prima (Priory)". *Monastic Wales*. 9 June 2015 <<http://www.monasticwales.org/browsedb.php?func=showsite&siteID=45>>; Burton, Janet; Stöber, Karen. *Abbeys and Priories of Medieval Wales...*: 128-134.



and published literature, is presented, chronologically and fully referenced, in a clear, accessible way, with suggestions for further reading.

8.3 Cwmhir Abbey (Cistercian, Radnorshire)

A striking example of a site whose material remains do not reflect its role in the monastic landscape of medieval Wales, the Cistercian abbey of Cwmhir has now all but disappeared.³⁷ Founded in the 12th century by a local Welsh lord as a daughter house of Whitland (like its sister abbey Strata Florida), Cwmhir's history was eventful and closely related to the volatile political situation of medieval Wales. Throughout most of its existence, the monastery was in the crossfire of English and Welsh hostilities, an uncomfortable situation echoed by the abbey's changing patronage history: Cwmhir passed from the hands of its Welsh founders in the 12th century briefly into those of English patrons and the protection of the English king in the early 13th century, and back into the hands of native Welsh patrons in the mid-13th century. Its cross-cultural existence was also reflected in its recruitment: in the 14th century the abbey was home to four monks, two of whom were Welsh, two English. Today next to nothing remains of the former Cistercian monastery, and yet the house has a very central place in Welsh sentiment: it was here that the last of the native Welsh princes, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, was laid to rest after he was killed near the site during the final campaign of King Edward I of England in December 1282. A plain tombstone was laid in the remains of the abbey church in 1977, on the seven hundredth anniversary of Llywelyn's death. Abbey Cwmhir remains an iconic site in Welsh sentiment. *Cyfeillion Abaty Cwmhir* ("The Friends of Cwmhir Abbey") exists to foster appreciation of the historical importance of the site, and organizes a series of lectures. The main annual lecture (delivered some years ago by one of the project directors) is held in early December, on the Sunday closest in date to the death of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, and is preceded in the abbey ruins by an ecumenical service of commemoration and reconciliation.

In the case of a monastic site with only fragmentary remains, the *Monastic Wales Project* plays a particularly central role in the appreciation of its heritage. The website brings to life a place of great historical significance that might otherwise be easily overlooked, having no eye-catching ruins to attract visitors.

As the three case studies demonstrate, the *Monastic Wales Project* is an active participant in the wider heritage management in Wales, be it by collating and expanding information about individual monastic sites in one easily accessible location (as in the case of Strata Florida), by providing thoroughly researched histories to complement the standing remains of an abbey or priory (as in the case of Llanthony Priory), and by making available and bringing to life monastic sites where little or no material remains now survive (as at Abbey Cwmhir).

37. "Cwmhir (Abbey)". *Monastic Wales*. 9 June 2015 <<http://www.monasticwales.org/browsedb.php?func=showsite&siteID=26>>; Burton, Janet; Stöber, Karen. *Abbeys and Priories of Medieval Wales...*: 80-83.



9. Conclusions

The *Monastic Wales Project* seeks to play a part in the preservation of Wales's medieval heritage on several levels by bringing the history and heritage of one small region to the attention of a wider, international audience. It is both a research tool and an educational platform, as well as offering practical information for the casual visitor.

By raising awareness of the monastic remains, the *Monastic Wales Project* promotes conscientious tourism, nurturing users' appreciation and understanding of the monastic ruins in their wider social, cultural, spiritual, political, and economic context, and in the landscape, and thereby encouraging adequate treatment of the material remains of the medieval Welsh monasteries.

The Monastic Wales Project is a working example of how much can be achieved with limited funding (to date £22,000) and in a short time.



THE USE OF INTERACTIVE AND EDUCATIONAL TOOLS TO UNDERSTAND ROMANESQUE HERITAGE: A CASE STUDY IN ERILL LA VALL (LLEIDA)

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the concept of interpretation centres as an effective tool to understand heritage. At the same time, it presents the case study of the *Centre del Romànic de la Vall de Boí* (CRVB) in Erill la Vall (Lleida). This model has been selected after a previous study taking into consideration qualitative, descriptive and exploratory criteria. The study was carried out in numerous Romanesque art interpretation centres throughout Spain. The results of the analysis show that this case includes those basic aspects established in the investigation in order to become an educational model that seeks as its main objective the proper interpretation of the Romanesque teaching.

KEYWORDS

Interpretation Centre, Vall de Boí, Romanesque Art, Museology, Education.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Interpretationis Domus, Valle Boinam, Ars Romanica, Musaeologia, Educatio.

1. Introduction. Interpretation centres: state of the question

In order to assess the state of the question of interpretation centres, we have to bear in mind that visual interaction with the object is indispensable during visits to heritage sites, but a strong intervention based on education and the principles of interaction can enhance the audience's interpretation of what they see. In fact, the main goal of heritage education is to give visitors keys to understanding the heritage.

Obviously, the nature of the works themselves and the need to ensure their conservation often means that we remain in the first stage of contemplation. However, the vast gap this creates between the audience and the object can be remedied with interpretative and educational elements. These elements of interpretation called museography are concentrated in particular in centers of interpretation. Remember that the interpretation centres born to make heritage more understandable whether the focus is an concept, natural element, era or an important figure.

Actually, the interpretation centre is:

un equipament creat per a posar en valor el patrimoni cultural i/o natural d'un espai determinat o d'una àrea geogràfica i transformar-lo en un producte didàctic, cultural i/o turístic. A diferència dels museus, aquests centres no col·leccionen, ni preserven ni estudien els objectes originals, però sí donen les claus per a permetre una millora en la comprensió del seu valor natural i cultural, per a alimentar la sensibilitat i la cultura, fent referència a alguna de les àrees del patrimoni cultural de la zona [...]. Aquesta és la solució possible per a difondre el concepte de patrimoni cultural en els petits nuclis i en les zones rurals, on no hi ha recursos necessaris per a crear museus reals i on aquesta riquesa pot convertir-se en un important factor de desenvolupament del sector turístic i de la recuperació de la identitat cultural dels habitants.¹

The first records of the idea of interpretation date back to Tilden,² who applies this concept to museology in the United States. When we analyse the word 'interpret', we see that it comes from the Latin lexeme *interpretare*, which means "to reveal the meaning of something". Nevertheless, the verb 'to exhibit', which comes from the Latin word *exponere* and is frequently used in relation to heritage, refers to *presentar*

1. "a facility created to showcase the cultural and natural heritage of a specific place or geographic area, and transform it into an educational, cultural and tourism product. Unlike museums, these centres do not collect, conserve or study original objects, but rather enhance our understanding of their natural and cultural value, developing sensitivity and culture, by referring to the cultural heritage sites in the area. Interpretation centres are potential solutions for disseminating the concept of cultural heritage in small towns and rural areas, where there are insufficient resources to create real museums, and where the wealth of the heritage could be used to develop the tourism industry and help local communities recover their cultural identity". *Interpretar el patrimoni, Guia bàsica*. Barcelona: Diputació de Barcelona, 2006: 43-44 (Based on the Research Project HICIRA, 2004).

2. In his work: Tilden, Freeman. *Interpreting our Heritage*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977 (first published in 1957). Translated into Spanish as: Tilden, Freeman. *La interpretación de nuestro patrimonio*. Pamplona: Asociación para la Interpretación del Patrimonio, 2006.



*una materia con claridad y método.*³ In fact, the aim of museology is to achieve both these things: to present material clearly and methodically, while also revealing its meaning. At the same time, we should also bear in mind that presenting, displaying and exhibiting an object is very different from revealing its obvious and hidden meanings. The meaning of the object when it was created and its meaning now. In other words, although these terms may seem synonymous, they are not. Shop windows exhibit products, for example, but in this case 'exhibit' means presenting an object to the public clearly and methodically and contrasts to our sense of the verb in musicology or museum design: in these fields, as well as seeking to exhibit objects and to display them for viewing and contemplation, the intention is to assist in their interpretation and to reveal their meaning.

The term 'interpret', therefore, is of little interest to the advertising executive, designer or windowdresser, but for the cultural manager or museologist, it is particularly important to go back to Tilden's idea that *interpretar es lo equivalente a lo que se ve y se experimenta* interpreting is equivalent to what is seen and experienced.⁴ Similarly, Ham and Morales consider that effective interpretation is a creative process of strategic communication, which produces intellectual and emotional connections between visitors and the resource in question. This process generates meanings for the same resource, so that it can be appreciated and enjoyed.⁵ If we return to the constructivist theories of meaningful learning proposed by Ausubel, Novak and Hanesian, learning depends not on a specific method but on whether the information presented can form a cognitive bridge with what the audience already knows.⁶ On the basis of this principle, the authors reflect on when it is considered that a message transmitted about a heritage item is interpretive and effective. We intend that the message clearly identifies the physical characteristics of the heritage work. At the same time, we also seek to relate abstract ideas with those physical characteristics of the work of art; in short, with something concrete so that visitors can identify it easily.

Similarly, and relating this question to the previous item, the message should also be associated with intangible ideas that can nevertheless be linked to general concepts, so that the visitor does not feel lost. All of this fosters intellectual and emotional connections in the visitors, which stimulate deep thought and lead to profound respect for the heritage item, which in turn contributes to its protection. In a nutshell, and to take Ham's reference to the maxim coined by an anonymous author in writing in the administrative manual of the US Park Service, we should

3. "the action of presenting a subject methodologically and clearly". Miguel, Raimundo de. *Nuevo diccionario latino-español etimológico*. Madrid: J.M. Bosch Editor, 1867:356.

4. "interpreting is equivalent to what is seen and experienced". From the Spanish version: Tilden, Freeman. *La interpretación de nuestro patrimonio...*: 25.

5. Morales, Jorge; Ham, Sam. "¿A qué interpretación nos referimos?". *Boletín de Interpretación*, 19 (2008): 4-7.

6. Ausubel, David Paul; Novak, Joseph; Hanesian, Helen. *Psicología educativa: un punto de vista cognoscitivo*. Mexico D.F.: Trillas, 1997.



consider that *por la interpretación, comprensión, por el entendimiento estima; por la estima, protección*.⁷

Also, in addition to the messages communicated to the visitor, we should stress that for a process of interpretation to be effective, each heritage item requires three levels of meaning. The first is the functional meaning, in other words, what the item is and how it is used. The second is the symbolic meaning: what the item's value is for the individual viewer and for society. The third is the contextual meaning, which concerns the scenario and situation surrounding the item. To decode the meaning of any heritage item, various questions arise, which lead us to discover the three meanings described above, on which we can then act.⁸ To give a specific example: if we stand in the cloister of the Monastery of Sent Benet de Bages and contemplate the capitals around the sides of the central space, we might ask what their functional meaning is. Obviously, a capital is an element of architecture situated at the top of a pillar to take the load of the arch or roof and transmit it down to the pillars. However, in addition to this structural function, capitals also have a clear symbolic meaning and were used, in the Middle Ages, to educate the public. In many cases, they depicted figurative scenes with symbolic aspects referring to biblical characters. And finally such capitals also become endowed with contextual meaning that, in our case, reflects a series of characteristics associated with the Romanesque period. Taking into account the message and the three levels of meaning of a heritage item, we might therefore propose that an interpretation centre is *un equipamiento situado en un edificio cerrado o a cielo abierto que normalmente no dispone de objetos originales y que tiene por objetivo revelar el sentido evidente u oculto de aquello que se pretende interpretar*.⁹

All in all, we present below a decalogue¹⁰ which we consider essential for all those centres that seek to be efficient (nonetheless, we are aware of the fact that we are dealing with resources with an original lack of definition). The underlying theoretical base used to generate these items has been the previous analysis of the main interpretation centres:

1. *Relaciona el objeto a interpretar con las ideas previas del usuario.*
2. *Su objetivo es instruir, emocionar, provocar, o desencadenar ideas.*
3. *Tiene en cuenta los segmentos de edad de los visitantes.*
4. *Tiene presente que interpretar no es tan solo informar.*
5. *Organiza jerárquicamente los contenidos.*
6. *Selecciona conceptos relevantes.*

7. "Through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection". Ham, Sam. "De la Interpretación a la Protección ¿Hay una base teórica?". *Boletín de Interpretación*, 18 (2008): 27-31.

8. Martín, Carolina. *Estudio analítico descriptivo de los centros de interpretación patrimonial en España*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona (PhD Dissertation), 2011.

9. "a facility situated in an enclosed building or in the open air that does not normally contain original objects and whose aim is to reveal the obvious and hidden meaning of the item to be interpreted". Martín, Carolina. *Estudio analítico descriptivo...*: 36.

10. Martín, Carolina. *Manual del centro de interpretación*. Gijón: Trea, 2013.



7. *Contiene elementos lúdicos.*
8. *Utiliza recursos museográficos diversos.*
9. *Concibe la interpretación com un hecho global y no parcial.*
10. *Interpreta objetos patrimoniales sin la necesidad de que los contenga.*¹¹

This decalogue, on which we should base an interpretation center, must be complemented by other concepts which belong to a less educative field, but which we should never forget: we refer to planning or human resources.

2. Methodology

To carry out this research, we first did an exploratory survey and analysis of the Romanesque interpretation centres in Spain. The observations were performed *in situ* and the data have been reflected in a chart. The instrument has been created from the decalogue presented in the former item. Subsequently, the results indicate that one of the models fulfills the ten points. It is for this reason that we have carried out an in-depth study of this center in order to be validated as a model, basing it on this case study method. This way, we have been able to delve into questions which are mainly related with how it has been carried out and with what tools. The aim of the study is an integrating perspective and, therefore, as Yin points out, it is a question of taking into consideration that “Investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”.¹²

3. Analysis for the selection of the model

The great diversity resulting from the uncontrolled proliferation of interpretation centres in the last twenty years implies the need to draw up an effective educational model. If the objective pursued with their creation is to teach through heritage, it makes sense to establish mainly educational models. In order to develop one of the centers as a model, we must analyse those which have been already established. To do so, we have created an assessment tool for the collection of data based on the

11. “1. Relate the object to be interpreted with the user’s existing ideas; 2. Have the goal of instructing, moving and provoking visitors or triggering ideas; 3. Take into account the age range of visitors; 4. Bear in mind that interpreting is more than just informing; 5. Organize contents hierarchically; 6. Select relevant contents; 7. Contain entertaining elements; 8. Use a range of museum design resources; 9. Consider that interpretation addresses the whole item, not a part of it; 10. Interpret heritage items without needing to house them in the centre”. Martín, Carolina. *Estudio analítico descriptivo...*:37.

12. Yin, Robert K. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994: 13.



ten items presented above. This tool is a technical datasheet drawn from a sectional and descriptive design.

The indicators are divided into five categories, depending on whether they refer to the contents (category 1), interpretation which takes place inside the centre (category 2), visitors (category 3), elements of mediation (category 4) and heritage works (category 5). In reference to the items of content, they have been structured in relation to three concepts: the user's previous ideas, the hierarchy and the relevance of the content covered. When dealing with the concept of interpretation, the items analyzed hinge around the question of whether it is conceived as a global fact, not just information that relates to the previous ideas of the user. Regarding the users, we have taken into account whether we might take the age range of visitors into consideration. In relation to the item of museography and educational elements, we have considered whether there is a diversity of museographic resources, as well as whether it uses ludic devices in its approach. Finally, we have considered the relationship with the heritage that it interprets.

The sample consists of those Romanesque interpretation centres which include the concept of 'Romanesque' in their nomenclature. The selection is based on the availability of access during the project life cycle (2015-2016). In total, ten interpretation centers satisfied the criterion mentioned above and it is evident that they are associated with the provinces that have more examples of Romanesque heritage.

Table 1. List of categories and items (Prepared by the author)

Categories	Items
Contents	Relate the object to be interpreted with the user's existing ideas
	Organize contents hierarchically
	Select relevant contents
Interpretation which takes place inside the centre	Have the goal of instructing, moving and provoking visitors or triggering ideas
	Consider that interpretation addresses the whole item, not a part of it
	Bear in mind that interpreting is more than just informing
Visitors	Take into account the age range of visitors
Elements of mediation	Contain entertaining elements
	Use a range of museum design resources
Heritage works	Interpret heritage items without needing to house them in the centre



The results of the study also follow a previous in-depth analysis which is not presented in this article.¹³ Out of the 10 centers analyzed, only one satisfied all the items, in addition to two centres which satisfied eight items, and two centres which satisfied six items respectively. In general terms, we can say that half of interpretation centres fulfill five or less items out of the total number of items. Also, we can highlight the two least satisfied items in most centres. We refer to the fact of considering the age range of visitors, as well as the fact that the main aim of the centres is to educate, stimulate, provoke or trigger ideas. Generally speaking, all the centres take into account that they do not have to contain the heritage objects in order to be able to interpret them as well as the selection of relevant concepts.

As it has been pointed out before, the initial analysis has made evident the only center that can become a model in the sense of representation and as an adjective that verges on the notion of 'ideal'. What we aim to seek by analyzing the model is to show an idealized representation of reality to show some of its principal and significant features. Due to the complexity of this phenomenon, it is necessary to undertake this research in order to understand it more easily, since many diverse factors converge in the educational process.

Table 2. Results of the comparative analysis applied to interpretation centres dedicated to the Romanesque art in Spain (Prepared by the author)

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Centre d'Interpretació del Romànic (Erill La Vall, Lérida)										
Centro de Interpretación del Románico (Villacantid, Cantabria)										
Centro de Interpretación del Románico en Álava (Vilafranca, Álava)										
Centro de Interpretación del Arte Románico en las Merindades (Medina de Pomar, Burgos)										
Centro de Interpretación del Románico (Huerta del Guadián, Palencia)										
Centro del Románico Rioja Románica (Treviana, La Rioja)										
Centro de Interpretación del Románico (Castañeda, Cantabria)										

13. Martín, Carolina. *Estudio analítico descriptivo...*



Table 3. List of items and interpretation centers that fulfill them (Prepared by the author)

Categories	Items	Centro de Interpretación Románico en Alava (Vilafranca, Alava)	Centro de Interpretación Andorra Románica (Andorra)	Centro de Interpretación Románico (Quintanilla, Burgos)	Centro de Interpretación Románico (Medina de Pomar, Burgos)	Centro de Interpretación Románico (Villacastell, Cantabria)	Centro de Interpretación Románico (Castañeda, Cantabria)	Centro del románico Rioja (Treviana, La Rioja)	Centro de Interpretación Románico (Erill La Vall, Lérida)	Aula de Interpretación del Románico (Artáiz, Navarra)	Centro de Interpretación del Románico (Huerta del Guadian, Palencia)
1	Relate the object to be interpreted with the user's existing ideas	X	Ø	Ø	Ø	X	Ø	Ø	X	Ø	Ø
	Organize contents hierarchically	Ø	Ø	X	X	X	Ø	Ø	X	Ø	X
	Select relevant contents	X	X	X	X	X	X	Ø	X	X	X
2	Have the goal of instructing, moving and provoking visitors or triggering ideas	X	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	X	Ø	Ø
	Consider that interpretation addresses the whole item, not a part of it	X	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	X	X	Ø	Ø
	Bear in mind that interpreting is more than just informing	X	Ø	Ø	Ø	X	X	Ø	X	Ø	Ø
3	Take into account the age range of visitors	Ø	Ø	Ø	X	X	Ø	Ø	X	Ø	X
4	Contain entertaining elements	X	Ø	Ø	X	X	X	X	X	Ø	X
	Use a range of museum design resources	X	Ø	Ø	X	X	Ø	Ø	X	Ø	X
5	Interpret heritage items without needing to house them in the centre	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X



natural heritage attract large numbers of visitors.¹⁶ The history of the recognition of the whole must be sought in the 19th century, as part of a series of actions to safeguard and disseminate the Catalan artistic and archaeological heritage, which at that time was under endangered and disperse.¹⁷ We know that the value and importance of 11th to 13th century art as part of the history and identity of Catalonia was internationally recognized from the early decades of the 20th century.¹⁸ Studies and monographs written by notable members of the industrial bourgeois have helped appraise the value of Catalan medieval heritage¹⁹ and interest in restoring these monuments was fostered by notable figures such as Puig i Cadafalch, Domènech i Montaner,²⁰ Gudiol i Cunill and Folch i Torres through the associations such as the *Centre Excursionista de Catalunya* or the *Associació Catalanista d'Excursions Científiques*.

From UNESCO. "The Criteria for Selection". UNESCO. 27 September 2015 <<http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/>>.

Catalan Romanesque Churches of the Vall de Boí were included at the list of World Heritage Site were selected on the basis of two criteria:

"Criterion (ii): The significant developments in Romanesque art and architecture in the churches of the Vall de Boí testify to profound cultural interchange across medieval Europe, and in particular across the mountain barrier of the Pyrenees.

Criterion (iv): The Churches of the Vall de Boí are an especially pure and consistent example of Romanesque art in a virtually untouched rural setting".

From UNESCO. "Catalan Romanesque Churches of the Vall de Boí". UNESCO. 27 September 2015 <<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/988/>>.

16. The office that manages Romanesque heritage in Boí, at Erill la Vall, explains that family tourism from around Catalonia predominates, although in recent years there has been a sharp rise in tourists from other parts of Europe, particularly French, Dutch, Italian and Spanish tourists. Visitors tend to combine the Romanesque route with nature tourism (one of the two entrances to the Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park is in the Vall de Boí, through which around 240,000 tourists pass per year) and with skiing at the Boí Taüll Resort, which has been open since 1998. Consequently, the growth in tourism in the valley in the last ten years cannot be attributed solely to the UNESCO world heritage declaration. However, the mayor of the Vall de Boí municipality is convinced that cultural tourism has helped to break the seasonal nature of visits, and has led to the emergence in recent years of four small hotels and rural guest houses, and five new restaurants, as well as the renovation and improvement of existing establishments. Centre del Romànic de la Vall de Boí. "Protecció i reconeixement". *Centre del Romànic de la Vall de Boí*, 27 September 2015 <<http://www.centreromanic.com/ca/protecció-i-reconeixement>>.

17. The churches of Sant Climent and Santa Maria de Taüll were the first to receive institutional recognition in 1931, when they were declared historical and artistic monuments. This declaration was not extended to the churches of Sant Joan de Boí and Santa Eulàlia d'Erill la Vall until 1962. In 1992, the Government of Catalonia declared the entire ensemble of churches in the Vall de Boí 'Heritage of Cultural Interest'. Two years later, the government launched its restoration programme for the churches. Centre del Romànic de la Vall de Boí. "Protecció i reconeixement". *Centre del Romànic de la Vall de Boí*, 27 September 2015 <<http://www.centreromanic.com/ca/protecció-i-reconeixement>>.

18. Carbonell, Eduard. *Guia art romànic*. Barcelona: Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, 2002.

19. Trepal, Cristòfol A. *L'Art romànic*. Barcelona: Editorial Barcanova, 1993.

20. Granell, Enric; Ramon, Antoni. *Lluís Domènech i Montaner, Viatges per l'arquitectura romànica*. Barcelona: Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya, 2006.



A key moment in the appraisal of this heritage took place in 1907,²¹ when the photographer Mas, along with Puig i Cadafalch and Gudiol i Cunill, undertook the *Missió Arqueològica-Jurídica a la Ratlla d'Aragó* ("Archaeological-Juridical Mission to the Aragon Border Area"), the first expedition organized by the *Institut d'Estudis Catalans* ("Institute of Catalan Studies").²² This meant its expansion around the world, while at the same time was one of the instruments which aroused greed on the part of international art collectionist.²³ After the different stages that the valley's heritage has passed through, it became strategically important to discover and understand the world of Romanesque art. This success brought certain responsibilities, which were mainly taken on by the World Heritage Consortium of the Vall de Boí,²⁴ amongst which we find the creation of interactive and didactic resources²⁵ in 2007.²⁶

The aim of this new facility, situated in Erill la Vall, was to welcome the flow of visitors who wished to see the churches, and to provide them with interpretive tools to stimulate cultural tourism throughout this small territory. The aim was to overcome one of the existing problems: visitors to the churches were only provided with some interpretive resources, such as information boards or leaflets handed out with the tickets.²⁷ Consequently, the visitors relied very much on their own resources when trying to interpret heritage items.

The proposal is supported by two questions that arise from the selection of relevant contents and the desire to create a hierarchy in the contents relating it to the user's previous ideas. The first question is 'how is this testimony, which belongs to such a specific historic period, preserved?', and the other one is: 'What are the historical and artistic circumstances in which it arose?' The project was conceived with the idea of interesting, entertaining and educating the visitor by using a dynamic new system, bearing in mind that interpreting is more than just informing. This system would be based on a highly participative strategy that not only promoted learning

21. Historical novels are also a good way of disseminating knowledge about historic periods. In this case, a novel by Martí Gironell (Gironell, Martí. *Strappo, l'espòli del romànic català*. Barcelona: Ediciones B, 2015) was inspired by an exhibition held in the *Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya* (MNAC) on the Romanesque period, and by the author's fascination for the history behind the paintings from Santa Maria de Mur that were taken to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, in one of the most paradigmatic examples of art plundering from the Pyrenees, and the trigger for subsequent campaigns to safeguard Romanesque paintings.

22. This initiative is considered one of the most relevant, as from this time on, the publications in instalments that appeared in the collection *Pintures murals catalanes* ("Catalan murals"), with illustrations of the most notable murals, became very important.

23. Camps, Jordi; Pagès, Montserrat. *Guia Visual Art Romànic*. Barcelona: Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, 2002.

24. Comprising the Vall de Boí Town Council, the Alta Ribagorça Area Council, Lleida Provincial Government, the Government of Catalonia and the bishoprics of Lleida and Urgell.

25. Tomasa, Eudald; Serra, Rosa. "La museografia audiovisual e hipermedia y sus aplicaciones en el monasterio de Sant Benet de Bages (Barcelona)". *Hermes*, 1 (2009): 21-29.

26. Castellà, Cristina; Grifoll, Laia. "El conjunto románico del valle de Boí: patrimonio mundial en un entorno rural". *Hermes*, 1 (2009): 99-108.

27. Castellà, Cristina; Grifoll, Laia. "El conjunto románico del valle de Boí...": 99-108.



and the development of activities, but also contributed to interesting people in the material under analysis. In fact, these strategies constitute a way of working found in many procedures that simulate decision making²⁸ to solve problems. In short, the aim was to create an educational facility to educate, provoke or trigger ideas.

With its analysis, we can see how one of the objectives is to make the interpretation centre become a driving force to promote heritage in the region. Consequently, a wide target audience was considered. The intention was to avoid spaces that appear to be designed only for school visits. As a result, all the contents were designed so that visitors could enjoy the centre without needing any existing cultural knowledge. There are different levels to satisfy all visitors, including very young children, the general public, and special groups such as elderly people, taking into account the age groups of visitors. The intervention is based on mechanisms that promote interest in the knowledge and understanding of global interpretation as fact and part with three ingredients were essential inasmuch as these are also the factors that govern most of our actions: visual attraction, sensory stimulation and emotional pleasure. Without these, there would be no interest in asking questions, and therefore no interest in the replies.²⁹

At the same time, these three axioms are applied in order to work on the contents provided by the center and, that are based principally on the idea that learning that paintings, sculptures and architecture of the Romanesque period can be used as a primary source to understand the Middle Ages firsthand. Moreover, they are useful to get historical and social information from their iconographic and iconologic analysis, both about the personalities of the time and about the relationship between them. Similarly, the iconographic sources of the time are analyzed with the help of further primary sources such as the Bible, bestiaries, the *Physiologus* and the Golden Legend.

5. Basis for the analysis of museography in interpretation centres

In this section of the analysis, the museography of the centre is studied in depth center and whether it uses diverse museographic resources and various ludic elements as the main tool for the interpretation of heritage. The museum items in the interpretation centre were designed using a simple format. They mainly rely on audiovisual and interactive resources, so as to reduce the number of texts on information panels and facilitate more effective communication. For the same reason, push buttons were used on each item in the museum space, so that visitors could choose from four languages: English, French, Spanish or Catalan.

28. Santacana, Joan; Llonch, Nayra. *Manual de didàctica del objeto en el museo*. Gijón: Trea, 2012.

29. Batista, Ricardo. "Diseñando centros de interpretación. De la idea al resultado, un proceso lleno de seducciones". *Her@Mus: heritage & museography*, 2/2 (2010): 88-93.



In fact, the facility is designed as a fully interactive installation³⁰ whose main concern is to constantly engage and entertain visitors as they explore the processes and sequences. This kind of facility is defined as entertaining and scientific, and its particularly interactive design is intended to appeal to a wide audience, from schoolchildren to specialists. The centre's focus on fun and enjoyment, which is bound to be attractive to the youngest audiences, is not incompatible with the scientific rigour of its approach. It is this rigour that captivates the specialists.³¹ As a result of the study, we can observe that the approach used in the CRVB was based on scientific rigour, which had a specific impact on the work methods, the techniques, and all aspects that reflect the hypothetico-deductive method.³²

In terms of the arrangement of the centre, the space is divided into modules that follow a clear script, but can be operated independently. The visitor decides how long to spend on each of them, and often takes a lot of time on just one module that is of particular interest.³³ In the construction of facilities is discernible functional elements are prioritized over design, so that the modules are strong and can be operated easily, which enables visitors to interact with them directly.

The atmosphere is provided by oversized books that surround the visitor. Romanesque art heritage is like an open book, but we only know how to interpret and read it properly with the right decoder. The scenography in the CRVB is a metaphor for this.

The study shows that the design encourages an open kind of visit, with no fixed or linear route, mainly because experience shows that such routes bore and demotivate most visitors.

With the analysis, we see that it affects how visitors learn, and to take into account the theoretical models that explain this learning. This led to the design of the selected teaching-learning process and the type of interactive relationship to establish between the material and the user. Social and information processing models were particularly notable. The former are based on models of participation strategies, in which learning, and therefore interactivity, is normally established through a social group. The latter, learning and information processing models, are based on constructivism or discovery learning, which tends to occur in individual learning processes.

30. Alcalde, Jaume; Martínez, César. "Interactividad para nadie en general y para todos en particular: hacia una interactividad total". *Her@Mus: heritage & museography*, 2/2 (2010): 15-19.

31. Martín, Carolina; Castells, Júlia. "Análisis y clasificación de los modelos interactivos", *Manual de Museografía Interactiva*, Joan Santacana, Carolina Martín, coords. Gijón: Trea. 2010: 87-335.

32. Santacana, Joan; Llonch, Nayra. *Manual de didáctica...*

33. Coma, Laia; Sallés, Neus. "Recursos y materiales didácticos interactivos", *Manual de Museografía Interactiva*, Joan Santacana, Carolina Martín, coords. Gijón: Trea. 2010: 415-462.





ILLUSTRATION 1. LARGE FORMAT BOOKS, INTERIOR OF THE CRVB. PICTURE BY THE AUTOR.

The route begins in the central reception area where visitors are received. A counter selling products related to the Romanesque period and the region is situated in this part of the centre. This is also where visitors can obtain all the practical information they need for enjoyable excursions in the region, particularly to the Romanesque ensemble of churches. The space therefore functions as a kind of visitor centre. On each side of this central reception area are two rooms housing the spaces for interpretation.

On the right is the first interpretive space, called *Fa mil anys, quan la vall es va obrir al món* ("A thousand years ago, when the valley opened up to the world"). This space uses mainly audiovisual language. The first item is a display involving video, light and sound that transports the visitor to the historical context of the Romanesque period in the Vall de Boí, around the year 1000. This is an unconventional audiovisual show, as it is complemented by concealed props that are only revealed by a play of lights during the projection.

The system uses a screen situated at the front of the room, made of material that becomes transparent as a result of changes in the intensity of the spotlights on either side of the screen. Behind this screen and inside light boxes are various props that are only visible when the backlighting system inside the boxes is activated. They include items that provide context, such as the chair of Sant Pere, papal parchments

with seals, half constructed altar frontals, and a still life of a table with pigments, brushes and chalk.



ILLUSTRATION 2. PROPS IN THE AUDIOVISUAL SHOW. PICTURE BY THE AUTOR.

In this space, which has a capacity of about 50 people, the aim is to immerse visitors in the Romanesque period without using very technical language. Following the analysis, we can see that the visitor is captivated by the situation in the region around the year 1000, 'when Catalonia opened up to the world', in the words of Ramon d'Abadal i Vinyals.

We can see that to the left of the reception area is the specific interpretive space. As it was decided not to remodel this bright, relatively small room with a high ceiling, the modules were distributed so that they did not form very small compartments that would have broken the unity of the space. Therefore, the modules are enclosed in spaces that are quite low, so that the roof can be clearly seen and the space is not broken up. The entire interpretive space is based on the concept of the *scriptorium*, that is, a set of manuscripts and miniated works. It is well known that a set of Catalan books were illuminated in some of the major production centres of the



region, including the Missal of Arles, the Beatus of Turin and that of Girona, the Homiliary of Beda, the Bible of Ripoll and that of Rodes, and the Beatus of the Seu d'Urgell. We also know that much of the Romanesque iconography was inspired by miniatures in these works.³⁴ To the visitor's eye, the room appears to be a set of large books, of vast dimensions, piled up in a disorderly fashion. But if we look closely, the large format books make up four exhibition spaces that are slightly hidden and imperceptible on first glance. From the outside, all of them appear to be large medieval miniated codexes. Some are open, whilst others are shut so that only the spine or the covers are visible. The visitor is immersed in an unknown space, like a large library in which only four books can be seen. Each one of these books—which forms a subspace in the room—explains part of the history associated with this period of notable importance of the churches (both in medieval times at the start of the 20th century).

The results of the analysis show that textual and iconographic primary sources are used throughout the centre, as they are considered most interesting from a methodological perspective, to introduce students to scientific logic in history. The idea is to present individuals with a series of objects, remains or written texts so that they can extract as much historical information as possible, to resolve a specific problem or answer a certain question. We intend to work with primary sources so that the visitor can be able to determine what information is provided by a source at a given moment. Whatever option is presented, whether from the present or the past, individuals must know how to improvise mechanically and automatically, to differentiate between opinions based on direct experience, and those reconstructed from distant or clichéd views. A multi-faceted approach must therefore be used to examine all of the potential information.³⁵ The lack of accessible spaces for the general public that focus on primary and secondary sources was also taken into account. For this reason, primary textual sources were chosen for the Romanesque interpretive space. These texts take us back to the past directly, and are an essential element to provide information about history. This is the case in the first sub-area: *La Vall en el gresol de l'art* ("The valley in the melting pot of art"), which was designed to help people understand the essence of Romanesque art in the valley. As well as the symbology, this area explains how between the seventh and tenth centuries in western Europe there was a conflict of numerous styles, which began to be reconciled at the end of the period, in approximately the year 1000. The display shows how some people at this time, particularly in monasteries and convents, appreciated the art of reading and admired the works of the Ancient World that had been preserved. These erudite clergy held important positions in the courts, the countships and the homes of the lords.

In the middle of the piles of books, a small space exhibits illustrations with loops and geometric elements belonging to the 'Barbarian' aesthetic, together with illustrations that form the Late Roman and Byzantine world. All of these

34. *Iniciación al arte románico*. Aguilar de Campoo: Fundación Santa María La Real, 2002.

35. Feliu, Maria; Hernández, Francesc X. *12 ideas clave Enseñar y aprender historia*. Barcelona: Graó, 2011.



images ‘fuse’ into one that shows the aesthetic of Romanesque art in the Vall de Boí. The message of this space is therefore that artistic styles came together in the Romanesque melting pot to form the first great art of the West. All of this information is transmitted inside a circular enclosure that represents a book from the late Roman period, in other words, a large format scroll. In the centre is a lectern holding an interactive touch screen with information about the primary sources that inspired the items that today form part of the Romanesque collections at the *Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya* (MNAC), which are from the Vall de Boí.



ILLUSTRATION 3. INTERACTIVE INSTALLATION BASED ON THE PRIMARY SOURCES ABOUT ROMANESQUE ART IN THE VALL DE BOÍ. PICTURE BY THE AUTHOR.

In this module, visitors can look up excerpts from these sources (the Old Testament, the Gospel and the New Testament) and other sources from the medieval and earlier periods (the bestiaries, the *Cathemerion* by Prudentius, the *Apocryphal Gospels*, the *Physiologus* attributed to Melito of Sardis, and the works of Pseudo-Dionysius, among others) that were used to illustrate the most representative works in the churches of Vall de Boí. The faithful who went to church and all the notable figures from the feudal period knew how to interpret and decipher these codes. The aim of the touch screen content is to help visitors to read between the lines, in the same way as in the medieval period.



The next sub-area that we find, called *La Vall de Boí, entre el Pallars Jussà i el Pallars Sobirà* ("The Vall de Boí, between Pallars Jussà and Pallars Sobirà") appears on a large open book, projected as a chronicle of the period. This module describes how the valley was caught between two powers of the time: the counts of Pallars Jussà and Sobirà, as well as the bishoprics of Roda and Urgell. The script for this module was drawn from another primary source, the *Crònica d'Aladò* (covering a period from 1154 to the end of the 13th century). The visitor suddenly finds a page that appears to be from the Bible of Ripoll, which is preserved in the Vatican Apostolic Library;³⁶ it is a page from the Second Book of the Maccabees. The chronicler comes to life and takes us back to the typical feudal society of the time, to explain in narrative form the disputes that arose between Pallars Jussà and Pallars Sobirà.



ILLUSTRATION 4. OPEN BOOK RECREATING THE FIGURE OF A CHRONICLER OF THE PERIOD. PICTURE BY THE AUTHOR.

36. Biblioteca apostolica vaticana. Manoscritti Vaticani latini, 5729.

The third sub-area that the visitor finds is called *Les esglésies de la Vall de Boí: Les 9 pedres vives* ("The churches of the Vall de Boí: 9 living stones"). This space is organized like a *scriptoria* with medieval desks as props. In this area, visitors discover the specific features of the nine churches in the valley at three key moments: during construction, rediscovery and restoration.



ILLUSTRATION 5. EDUCATIONAL MODULES BASED ON THE FEATURES OF A SCRIPTORIUM. PICTURE BY THE AUTHOR.

The desks use different resources, such as viewers or interactive pull-out drawers, to display information about the removal of the paintings, the architecture of the churches (with ground plans and elevations), and reproductions of the materials



and tools used in the painters' workshops. Using a play of mirrors, these medieval desks are repeated to infinity; the aim is to show that history is immensely long.



ILLUSTRATION 6. DETAILS OF EDUCATIONAL SCRIPTORIUM. PICTURE BY THE AUTHOR.

Finally, to end the visit, the climax of the interpretation centre is found in an area called the *Veus de la Vall* ("Voices of the Valley"). In this space is a replica of the Presbytery bench from Sant Climent de Taüll (held at the MNAC).³⁷ The bench is a metaphor for the valley's society: many pieces of wood brought together in one piece. In this case, the bench is shown bare and on its own. It acts as the backdrop for the appearance of three key figures in the history of the Vall de Boí. With the right atmosphere created, three ghostly figures appear as witnesses who describe their experiences of events related to the conception and rediscovery of Romanesque art. The three scripts were also based on primary sources from the periods that the figures represent. The first, the Countess of Erill (based on texts of Countess Duoda³⁸ and accounts about the Countess of Erill), explains how the paintings were commissioned, and describes the typical concerns of women of the time of her status. The second figure is a priest, a figure of high social standing in the Middle Ages, who describes society at that time.

Finally, Puig i Cadafalch appears and tells the exciting story of the discovery of the paintings, with a script drawn from his diaries.

37. Camps, Jordi; Pagès, Montserrat. *Guia Visual Art Romànic...*

38. Portet, Laura. *Duoda, comtessa de Barcelona*. Barcelona: Rafael Dalmau, 2008.



ILLUSTRATION 7. STYLIZED DEPICTION OF THE COUNTESS OF ERILL. PICTURE BY THE AUTHOR.



ILLUSTRATION 8. STYLIZED DEPICTION OF PUIG I CADAFAALCH. PICTURE BY THE AUTHOR.

6. Conclusions

This study has been carried out in order to provide tools to avoid the lack of strategic planning and the lack of fundamentals needed to create an effective centre. Talking about models of heritage interpretation is talking about something similar to translating. We intend to translate images, concepts, written messages in different languages into a language known to all. This complex task must be carried out by a team able to translate science into a language comprehensible to users. To do so, very specific skills and knowledge are required, and in the same way that there is no an automatic universal translator, there is not a universal expert either. We need experts in the different disciplines (in the subject and teaching) in order to translate correctly—to interpret—scientific heritage. Experts should be able to select relevant concepts and organize hierarchically the content. Likewise, these experts must also create diverse museographic elements, ludic and didactic, in order to get closer to the audience. This implies being an expert in teaching, pedagogy and museography. In fact, we have to take into account the interests of the audience, who are the *raison d'être* of interpretation centres, since they exist because they are there. Seeing that cultural facilities have become educational spaces, where users do not stare at elements, but they experience them, they experience emotions and



learn. The audience happens to enjoy a new focus. It is therefore necessary to keep the museographical and museological proposals which appeal to users, leaving aside those which have become obsolete or those which only stir the managers of the centre's interest, but not the users'.

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ORIGINALS OF THE TEXTS NOT SUBMITTED IN ENGLISH



COMBATIR EN LA PENÍNSULA IBÉRICA MEDIEVAL: CASTILLA-LEÓN, SIGLOS XI AL XIII. ESTADO DE LA CUESTIÓN

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RESUMEN

El análisis de la planificación y ejecución de los combates, de las tácticas y de las estrategias en el ámbito castellano-leonés de la Plena Edad Media estuvo, desde el siglo XIX, en manos de militares profesionales y fuertemente influido por los postulados positivistas. A partir de la década de los 70 del siglo XX, la progresiva extensión en las Universidades españolas de las grandes corrientes historiográficas —principalmente *Annales* y el marxismo—, muy centradas en los aspectos socioeconómicos, unido a la vigencia de algunos prejuicios políticos, mantuvo a estos temas al margen del interés del medievalismo profesional. Sólo a mediados de los años 90 del mismo siglo comenzaría una renovación en estos campos —influida por la historiografía anglosajona y francesa— que ha permitido a día de hoy su normalización en la vida académica.¹

1. Una sociedad organizada para la guerra

El análisis de la evolución histórica de los reinos cristianos peninsulares durante la Edad Media pone de manifiesto una realidad difícilmente cuestionable: en todos ellos la guerra se convirtió en un elemento vertebrador de sus conjuntos sociales, que tuvieron que adaptar sus estructuras, sus formas de ordenación y sus mecanismos de relación a las constantes exigencias de una conflictividad militar omnipresente. Hasta tal punto este panorama está aceptado por los estudiosos, que hoy en día resulta un lugar común la afirmación de que las ibéricas medievales fueron “sociedades organizadas para la guerra”, una expresión consagrada para el ámbito hispánico por Elena Lourie en 1966 que ha tenido un éxito notable.²

1. Este trabajo se ha realizado en el marco de los proyectos de investigación: *Las selecciones de discursos historiográficos desde la antigüedad hasta el renacimiento II: función retórica e historiográfica, fortuna literaria e influencia ideológica* (FFI2012-31813) y *Génesis y desarrollo de la guerra santa cristiana en la Edad Media del Occidente Peninsular (ss. X-XIV)* (HAR2012-32790) financiados por el Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad del Gobierno de España. Además forma parte de las actividades del Grupo de Investigación “Arenga” de la Universidad de Extremadura (HUM023) del catálogo de Grupos de Investigación de la Junta de Extremadura. Una primera versión del mismo fue presentada como ponencia en el *I Symposium Internacional. La conducción de la guerra (950-1350). Historiografía*, celebrado en Cáceres, entre el 18 y 20 de noviembre de 2008. Aunque los organizadores de dicha reunión se comprometieron a editar los trabajos presentados, lo cierto es que a mediados de 2015 todavía no se habían publicado. Como puede suponerse, al cabo de siete años algunas de las referencias y conclusiones que allí expusimos han quedado superadas u obsoletas, de ahí que en el presente texto hayamos procedido a actualizar algunas de ellas.

2. Lourie, Elena. “A society organized for war: Medieval Spain”. *Past and Present*, 35 (1966): 54-76. Años más tarde la expresión sería literalmente recogida por: Powers, James F. *A Society Organized for War. The Iberian Municipal Militias in the Central Middle Ages, 1000-1284*. Berkeley-Los Ángeles-Londres: University of California Press, 1988. No pocos autores han reiterado la misma idea.



Por supuesto, esta consideración puede extenderse a todo el período medieval de la historia peninsular y a todos los reinos, pero no cabe duda de que la frecuencia, intensidad y trascendencia de los conflictos armados no fue la misma a lo largo de toda aquella etapa, ni todas las sociedades peninsulares se vieron afectadas o condicionadas por el “fenómeno bélico” en idéntica medida. En este sentido, creemos que el ámbito castellanoleonés —como reino unificado o como dos entidades políticas distintas— entre los siglos XI y XIII pasó por unas experiencias que lo convierten en un objeto de estudio particularmente interesante y privilegiado para el análisis de la guerra y de la historiografía que sobre este fenómeno ha venido desarrollándose durante las últimas décadas. Con todo, no puede obviarse que los demás reinos cristianos peninsulares pasaron por circunstancias históricas similares y que muchas de las tendencias historiográficas que señalaremos en este trabajo, referidas específicamente a León y Castilla, pueden aplicarse, con las debidas matizaciones, a aquellas otras entidades.³

Como hiciera notar Georges Duby, toda la civilización europea occidental de aquella época, entre los siglos XI y XIII, estuvo *toute entière dominée par le fait militaire*,⁴ pero en el contexto que ahora tratamos puede observarse que, además de una conflictividad comparable a la del resto de Occidente —guerras entre reinos o monarquías, querellas dinásticas, enfrentamientos entre monarquía y nobleza o entre miembros de la propia nobleza—, existió un conflicto particular que singulariza a la belicosidad del conjunto de las sociedades medievales ibéricas con respecto a las del resto de Europa: la guerra contra el Islam.

Hace mucho tiempo que los historiadores vienen resaltando la idea de que el permanente conflicto con los musulmanes marcó profundamente los rasgos de estas comunidades. Reiteradamente se ha puesto de manifiesto la influencia de la guerra y de la expansión militar a costa del Islam peninsular en las más variadas vertientes de la vida de aquéllas: en la organización política de los reinos y en la configuración de unas monarquías fuertes gracias a su liderazgo bélico contra los islamitas; en las instituciones feudales clásicas, cuya maduración se vio dificultada precisamente por el poder que los reyes llegaron a concentrar como consecuencia de su posición central en la guerra y en la organización militar de los reinos; en la formación de las elites nobiliarias, que encontraron en la lucha contra los musulmanes una forma de vida y una función que justificaba su predominio; en la creación de una sociedad muy permeable gracias a las posibilidades de ascenso y de cambio generadas por la conflictividad fronteriza; en las actividades y estructuras económicas, cuyos desarrollos se vieron muy condicionados por los beneficios y perjuicios procedentes de la acción bélica; en la formación de una mentalidad, de una ideología y de una sensibilidad religiosa particulares, que no sólo hicieron del conflicto armado anti-islámico una forma de piedad, sino que además construyeron un argumento histórico, jurídico y sacralizado —la ideología de la Reconquista— para justificar la destrucción de los poderes políticos musulmanes en la Península Ibérica. Aunque podríamos hacer mención, a este respecto, a una larga serie de autores y títulos, creemos que, de forma meramente ilustrativa, puede bastar con recordar cómo Sánchez Albornoz, a mediados del

3. Es el caso de la Corona de Aragón, cuya historiografía sobre la guerra parece haber seguido tendencias similares a la castellano-leonesa: Orsi, Mario. “La guerra en la Corona de Aragón (siglos XIII-XV). Aproximación metodológica a través de su historiografía”, *VI Jornadas Luso-espanholas de História Medieval: A Guerra e a Sociedade na Idade Média*. Torres Novas: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos Medievais-Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2009: I, 551-571; Orsi, Mario. “La Història Militar de la Corona d’Aragó a la Baixa Edat Mitjana: passat, present i futur”. *Ex novo: revista d’història i humanitats*, 7 (2011): 181-201.

4. “enteramente dominada por el hecho militar”. Duby, George. “Guerre et Société dans l’Europe féodale: Ordonnement de la Paix”, *Concetto, Storia, Miti e Immagini del Medio Evo*, Vittore Branca, ed. Florencia: Sansoni Editori, 1973: 449.

siglo XX, no dudaba en identificar la formación de una supuesta esencialidad hispánica, la del *homo hispanicus*, precisamente a partir de “la acción de la multiseccular pugna con el Islam”.⁵

Dejando de lado el “esencialismo” albornociano, lo cierto es que la guerra en la Edad Media hispánica se nos presenta continuamente como un factor fundamental para la comprensión de sus realidades históricas. De hecho, veinte años después de que el gran historiador abulense subrayase tan enfáticamente “las proyecciones históricas de esa larga y compleja empresa [la guerra contra los musulmanes] en la cristalización de muy variadas facies del vivir hispano”,⁶ Angus Mackay volvía a incidir sobre la misma idea, resaltando ahora la extraordinaria influencia que las fronteras frente a al-Andalus tendrían en la conformación de las sociedades peninsulares según afirmaba en 1977:

Muchos de los rasgos peculiares del desarrollo histórico ibérico se explican en términos de la experiencia fronteriza y la dureza de una empresa, la reconquista, que había conseguido casi la totalidad de sus objetivos a finales del siglo XIII... La existencia de una frontera militar permanente significaba, virtualmente, que la España medieval era una sociedad organizada para la guerra....⁷

A ningún medievalista le ha pasado desapercibido que la Reconquista, entendida en su acepción aséptica y neutra como la expansión territorial de los reinos peninsulares cristianos a costa de al-Andalus o, en palabras de Antonio Ubieto, como “ocupación violenta de tierras pobladas por gentes musulmanas, tras una acción militar”,⁸ representa normalmente la necesaria primera fase de la serie de trascendentales e irreversibles cambios a los que quedarían sometidas las sociedades y territorios conquistados, en orden a su integración en la estructura política, socioeconómica y cultural de los conquistadores.⁹

2. Razones de una exclusión historiográfica

Pues bien, a pesar la importancia objetiva del hecho militar en el desarrollo de los reinos ibéricos medievales, lo cierto es que el medievalismo hispánico, al menos hasta finales del siglo pasado, ha prestado mucha menos atención al análisis de los aspectos estrictamente bélicos del proceso expansivo que al de las consecuencias políticas, socioeconómicas y culturales derivadas del mismo. De esta forma, frente a unas raquílicas o inexistentes líneas de investigación relacionadas con la guerra medieval, la historiografía académica, aquella que se había beneficiado de las innovaciones teóricas o metodológicas de las grandes corrientes historiográficas del siglo XX, centró su interés en las dinámicas demográficas desarrolladas a raíz de las anexiones, en la organización social de los espacios conquistados, en las modificaciones experimentadas en la explotación de la tierra y en su régimen de propiedad, en su incidencia sobre las actividades y redes comerciales, o en las

5. Sánchez Albornoz, Claudio. *España, un enigma histórico*. Barcelona: Edhasa, 1991: 1263 (la primera edición se remonta a 1956).

6. Sánchez Albornoz, Claudio. *España, un enigma histórico...*: 725.

7. Mackay, Angus. *La España de la Edad Media. Desde la frontera hasta el Imperio, 1000-1500*. Madrid: Cátedra, 1980: 12 (la edición original en inglés es de 1977).

8. Ubieto, Antonio. “Valoración de la reconquista peninsular”. *Príncipe de Viana*, 31/120-121 (1970): 214.

9. García de Cortázar, José Ángel. “La Reconquista en el siglo XI: ¿Geográfica o cultural?”. *IX Centenario da dedicação da Sé de Braga. Congresso Internacional, O Bispo D. Pedro e o Ambiente Político-Religioso do Século XI*. Braga: Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 1990: I, 695-696. Sobre los diversos significados del concepto de Reconquista en la historiografía, véase: García Fitz, Francisco. *La Reconquista*. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2010: 35-56.



novedades institucionales introducidas por los conquistadores en las ciudades o territorios ganados a los musulmanes.

En la mayoría de los estudios que abordan estos temas se da por supuesto que la actividad guerrera constituía la antesala de las profundas transformaciones a las que quedaría sometido el espacio anexionado, pero aquella —la acción bélica— casi nunca mereció, con anterioridad a los años 90 del siglo XX, el interés del medievalismo hispánico que, durante las décadas de los años 70 y 80, había comenzado a renovarse en los círculos académicos. Parafraseando libremente a un conocido especialista británico, John Gillingham, cabría afirmar que los historiadores españoles habían estado tan ocupados estudiando lo que ocurría una vez que los ejércitos alcanzaban sus objetivos —cuestiones por otra parte de una trascendencia incuestionable—, que apenas tuvieron oportunidad de dedicarse a analizar lo que estos hacían mientras guerreaban para conseguirlos.¹⁰

¿A qué puede achacarse este palpable desinterés? Como explicábamos hace ya casi veinte años, en unas consideraciones que retomamos ahora,¹¹ para entender por qué el medievalismo español se desentendió de este ámbito de estudio tenemos que tener en cuenta el arraigo, durante mucho tiempo, de algunos prejuicios historiográficos, políticos y sociológicos en el mundo universitario español. A este respecto, quizás lo primero que puede constatarse es que desde el siglo XIX, pero especialmente a lo largo del siglo XX, los historiadores académicos se han acercado con absoluta naturalidad al estudio de muchas facetas de la guerra, tales como las obligaciones militares, las milicias concejiles, el botín o las tenencias de fortalezas, por citar algunas áreas de investigación, porque consideraban —con razón, por otra parte— que estos temas estaban imbricados en la historia de las instituciones, en la historia social, en la historia económica o en la historia urbana, parcelas que se enmarcaban plenamente en las grandes líneas de trabajo de la historiografía del siglo XX y, por ello, dignas de ser tratadas por la mano del investigador profesional.

Sin embargo, hasta la segunda mitad de la década de los años 80 del siglo XX, la historia de las formas de combatir, de la manera de hacer la guerra, siguió siendo considerada como un asunto propio de militares, hecho por militares con aspiraciones eruditas para colegas aficionados a cuestiones históricas. Los historiadores universitarios se comportaban hacia estos asuntos, de hecho, como si su tratamiento requiriese de unos conocimientos tácticos o estratégicos que sólo estaban al alcance de los militares de profesión, o simplemente como si la manera de ejecutar una operación militar determinada careciera de interés, con lo que de hecho renunciaban a la investigación de esta parcela de la realidad. En consecuencia, durante los siglos XIX y XX la mayor parte de los títulos sobre estas materias fueron publicados por autores *amateurs*, por lo que no es de extrañar que se haya constatado una evidente desvinculación de la historia militar respecto a otras especialidades de la investigación histórica.¹²

Con todo, creemos que esta primera observación es insuficiente para explicar el desinterés de la historiografía profesional española respecto a estas materias. A nuestro juicio, para comprender

10. Gillingham, John. "Richard I and the Science of War in the Middle Ages", *Anglo-Norman Warfare. Studies in late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman military organization and warfare*, Matthew Strickland, ed. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992: 194.

11. García Fitz, Francisco. *Castilla y León frente al Islam. Estrategias de expansión y tácticas militares (siglos XI-XIII)*. Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1998: 25-26.

12. Ladero, Miguel Ángel. "La organización militar de la Corona de Castilla durante los siglos XIV y XV", *La incorporación de Granada a la Corona de Castilla*, Miguel Ángel Ladero, ed. Granada: Diputación Provincial, 1993: 195; González Jiménez, Manuel; García Fitz, Francisco. "Historia política y estructura de poder. Castilla y León", *La Historia Medieval en España. Un balance historiográfico (1968-1998)*. *Actas de la XXV Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella (14 al 18 de julio de 1998)*. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 1999: 201-202.

esta abdicación hay que tener en cuenta otro fenómeno intelectual particularmente relevante: nos referimos a la paulatina expansión en los círculos universitarios españoles, desde finales de los años sesenta, de las dos grandes corrientes historiográficas del siglo XX, la escuela de los *Annales* y el materialismo histórico. El énfasis que ambas propuestas pusieron en la historia económica y social, paralelo a su evidente menosprecio por la historia política, vino a agrandar aún más la distancia entre la investigación que se hacía en la Universidad española y los estudios sobre la guerra: después de todo, a los ojos de las nuevas corrientes que impulsaban con una fuerza desconocida el panorama del medievalismo hispano, la historia militar se identificaba con el positivismo más rancio, aquél que se había dedicado a la mera narración de hechos militares, que a la postre constituían, junto con otros acontecimientos políticos particulares y con una inútil maraña de fechas, el entramado de una historia evenemenial, de la que se abjuraba.¹³

Pero, además de prejuicios historiográficos, creemos que en la base de aquella renuncia también había, en el caso español, prejuicios sociológicos y políticos: como acabamos de comentar, las aproximaciones a estas materias procedían fundamentalmente de ambientes militares que, después de la Guerra Civil, se identificaban plenamente con el régimen de Franco. Por otra parte, el nacional catolicismo recurrió sistemáticamente a los hechos, personajes e ideas relacionados con la Reconquista como recurso propagandístico, de modo que unas publicaciones de tono heroico y pomposo, una historia militar “de tambores y trompetas”, por utilizar la expresión aquilatada por la historiografía norteamericana,¹⁴ se ponía al servicio de los valores militaristas, nacionalistas y católicos del franquismo y encontraba en las gestas de Pelayo, del Cid Campeador, de San Fernando o de los Reyes Católicos, ejemplos del pasado dignos de imitación, ya fuera por su lucha contra los extranjeros o los infieles enemigos de la fe, ya fuera por su defensa de la unidad de la Patria. Con estos precedentes, y de manera casi inevitable, el todavía incipiente, pero sin duda creciente, rechazo de la historiografía universitaria española de las décadas de los sesenta y setenta a los postulados políticos franquistas se extendió también a un terreno, el de la historia militar, cuya producción tanto se había identificado con aquel régimen.¹⁵

Es sabido que los prejuicios tienen un recorrido más largo y perdurable que las circunstancias objetivas que los generan, por lo que no es de extrañar que, aunque el franquismo institucional desapareciera a mediados de los años 70 y tanto el militarismo ideológico como el nacional catolicismo estuvieran en decadencia incluso desde antes, la prevención universitaria hacia el estudio de la guerra medieval siguió vigente por lo menos durante dos décadas más, es decir, durante casi toda una generación.

Se ha calculado que entre 1968 y 1998 se publicaron “algo así como el 95% de los trabajos de tema medieval generados en España en toda su historia”, con lo que se habría pasado “casi ‘de cero

13. Esta actitud no fue privativa ni de la historiografía ni del medievalismo hispánicos, sino que se inserta en una corriente mucho más amplia constatable en otros ámbitos académicos y para cualquier período histórico analizado. Véase al respecto: Espino, Antonio. “La renovación de la Historia de las Batallas”. *Revista de Historia Militar*, 91 (2001): 159-174.

14. Borreguero, Cristina. “Nuevas perspectivas para la historia militar: la “New Military History” en Estados Unidos”. *Hispania*, 54/1, 186 (1994): 148-149.

15. En este sentido, la falta de aprecio a la historia de la guerra en la Edad Media hispánica en los círculos universitarios de los años 60, 70 y 80, como consecuencia de su identificación con el militarismo franquista, fue paralela al experimentado por el concepto de Reconquista. Véase al respecto: García Fitz, Francisco. *La Reconquista...: 18-20*.



al infinito”¹⁶ en treinta años. Esta eclosión productiva fue en paralelo a la gestación de una sólida infraestructura de la actividad docente e investigadora, reflejada en la multiplicación de centros universitarios en general, y de Departamentos o Áreas de Conocimiento de Historia Medieval en particular, en la creación de fundaciones o centros de estudios e investigación especializados en el medioevo, y en el crecimiento extraordinario del número de revistas especializadas. Y todo ello, a su vez, tuvo un reflejo directo en “la proliferación, en cierto sentido quizás desmedida, de simposios, congresos y, en general, reuniones de estudio, ya sean de ámbito internacional, nacional o local y con diversos grados de especialización temática”, algunos de ellos con un carácter coyuntural, otros celebrados con una periodicidad regular.¹⁷ Pues bien, creemos que es altamente significativo, por lo que respecta a la exclusión de los estudios sobre actividad militar del medievalismo, no sólo la escasez de publicaciones sobre estas materias surgidas de las esferas académicas antes de la década de los años 90,¹⁸ sino también otras dos circunstancias dignas de consideración: primero, que la única publicación periódica especializada y de largo recorrido, la *Revista de Historia Militar*, fundada en 1957, dependía —y sigue dependiendo— del Ministerio de Defensa, estaba dirigida por militares y presentaba entre sus colaboradores a una mayoría de militares de profesión —casi el 90% de los artículos sobre historia militar medieval, publicados antes de 1990, fueron escritos por militares profesionales—;¹⁹ segundo, que la más longeva y productiva reunión periódica dedicada a estas cuestiones, las *Jornadas de Historia Militar* de la Cátedra General Castaño de Sevilla, ha sido organizada desde sus orígenes hasta nuestros días por una Capitanía General y no por centros universitarios o científicos —aunque en este caso la participación de autores de origen académico siempre ha sido relevante—, algo parecido a lo que ha ocurrido con los *Congresos de Historia Militar* de Zaragoza, vinculado a la Academia General Militar, aunque con un creciente presencia de investigadores e instituciones académicas en sus últimas celebraciones.

Así las cosas, no puede extrañar que todavía en una fecha tan reciente como 1994, precisamente en el marco de las *IV Jornadas de Historia Militar* celebradas en Sevilla, un joven investigador resaltara que

mientras que la guerra en Tierra Santa ya cuenta con dos magníficos trabajos generales al respecto [en referencia a las obras de Raymond Charles Smail y Christopher Marshall], la guerra en la

16. García de Cortázar, José Ángel. “Glosa de un balance sobre la historiografía medieval española de los últimos treinta años (I)”, *La Historiografía Medieval en España. Un balance historiográfico (1968-1998)*. *Actas de la XXV Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella (14 al 18 de julio de 1998)*. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 1999: 813-814.

17. Ruiz de la Peña, Juan Ignacio; Sanz, María Jesús. “Instrumentos, cauces y expresiones de la actividad investigadora”, *La Historiografía Medieval en España. Un balance historiográfico (1968-1998)*. *Actas de la XXV Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella (14 al 18 de julio de 1998)*. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 1999: 789-798.

18. La única síntesis sobre los ejércitos medievales hispanos, publicada en 1984, es obra de militares de carrera: Redondo, Fernando. *Historia del ejército español. 2. Los ejércitos de la Reconquista*. Madrid: Servicio Histórico Militar, 1984.

19. La otra gran revista con un contenido muy relacionado con la historia bélica, *Gladius*, especializada en el estudio de las armas y del arte militar en las épocas antiguas y medieval, que comenzó a publicarse en España a partir de su segundo número -1963- de la mano del matrimonio Hoffmeyer, se mantuvo prácticamente al margen del mundo universitario español hasta la segunda mitad de los años ochenta, y ello a pesar de que desde mediados de los años sesenta mantenía relaciones institucionales con el Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. Sólo a partir de la citada fecha algunos departamentos y un pequeño número de historiadores descubrieron no sólo el valor de la publicación, sino también la potencialidad científica del Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas, ubicado en Jaraíz de la Vera (Cáceres), que la sostenía. Sobre la historia del Instituto y de la revista, véase: García Vuelta, Óscar. “El Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas (CSIC). Una aproximación a su historia (1960-1998)”. *Gladius*, 26 (2006): 119-147.

Península todavía no ha merecido algún trabajo que intente englobar de manera sintética pero comprensiva su desarrollo, elementos y significación social.²⁰

Ciertamente no le faltaba razón, si bien como él mismo reconocía existían algunas aportaciones parciales y, aunque él no lo podía saber, para entonces ya se estaban poniendo las bases que cambiarían el panorama en relación con estos temas.

Sin duda la posición del medievalismo hispánico respecto al estudio de las formas de hacer la guerra no dejaba de ser un tanto paradójica: los reinos ibéricos, y de manera particularmente significada el castellano-leonés, habían protagonizado entre los siglos XI y XIII una expansión de tal envergadura que empujaba a las realizadas por el resto de los reinos del Occidente cristiano durante las mismas fechas y en otros contextos comparables.²¹ Por supuesto, la historiografía hispánica ha sido en todo momento consciente de la trascendencia de estos procesos, razón por la cual le ha prestado mucha atención, a veces de manera casi exclusiva y en detrimento de otros ámbitos de la realidad, a algunos aspectos de esta historia militar: la minuciosa reconstrucción de los acontecimientos y su cronología, por ejemplo, fue durante muchas décadas el hilo conductor de la producción positivista. Igualmente las fuentes documentales y jurídicas habían permitido aproximarse no sólo al estudio de los recursos económicos, de las estructuras sociales, de las instituciones políticas y de los resortes ideológicos que los propiciaron, sino también al análisis de sus consecuencias sociales, económicas, poblacionales e ideológicas. Sin embargo, y en esto radica la paradoja historiográfica a la que antes hacíamos referencia, nos acercábamos al siglo XXI sin apenas conocer cómo los comandantes conducían la guerra, cómo dispusieron, movieron y distribuyeron sus recursos militares para imponer su voluntad a sus adversarios.²²

En definitiva, apenas si sabíamos nada de las “estrategias” y de las “tácticas” que emplearon en aquel proceso, y ello a pesar de que el análisis de la forma de combatir de un ejército, más allá del interés que puede tener en sí mismo su conocimiento,²³ nos informa sobre no pocos aspectos de la comunidad que la desarrolla, desde las posibilidades y los límites de sus recursos materiales —la logística y los instrumentos de financiación— a sus valores sociales o morales —a través de la aplicación de la ética caballeresca o del estudio del tratamiento dado a los enemigos vencidos—, pasando por sus resortes institucionales —por ejemplo los que sirven para reclutar y organizar a un ejército—, el ejercicio del poder —mediante el análisis de las fórmulas de liderazgo y sus canales—,

20. Rodríguez García, José Manuel. “Fernando III y sus campañas en el contexto cruzado europeo, 1217-1252”, *IV Jornadas Nacionales de Historia Militar: Fernando III y su época*. Sevilla: Diputación Provincial, 1995: 217.

21. Lomax, Derek. *La Reconquista*. Barcelona: Crítica, 1984: 204. Véase también: García Fitz, Francisco. “Las formas de la guerra de conquista: el contexto hispánico medieval (siglos XI al XIII)”, *El mundo de los conquistadores. La península ibérica en la Edad Media y su proyección en la conquista de América*, Martín Ríos, ed. México-Madrid: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México-Silex, 2015: 457-458.

22. El trabajo clásico de Sánchez Albornoz sobre el ejército asturleonés, aunque se extiende hasta el siglo XI, no llega a abordar la expansión que se inicia en la segunda mitad de esta centuria: Sánchez Albornoz, Claudio. “El ejército y la guerra en el reino asturleonés”, *Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo. Ordinamenti militari in Occidente nell'alto Medioevo (Spoleto, 30 marzo-5 aprile 1967)*. Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1968: 1-136.

23. No hace falta recordar aquí la inusitada atención que estos temas despiertan en los últimos años entre los diseñadores de videojuegos y su amplísimo público o entre los cada vez más aficionados a la recreación histórica. Respecto a los primeros, véase: Jiménez Alcázar, Juan Francisco. “El arte de la guerra medieval: combates digitales y experiencias de juego”. *Roda da Fortuna*, 3/1-1 (2014): 516-546, así como las colaboraciones más específicas de: Echeverría, Ekaitz. “Abriendo Brecha: La imagen de la guerra de asedio medieval en los videojuegos”. *Roda da Fortuna*, 3/1-1 (2014): 547-563; Testi, Dario. “Medieval Total War II: veicolo della conoscenza dell'Arte della Guerra nelle nuove generazioni”. *Roda da Fortuna*, 3/1-1 (2014): 564-589; Negro, Adrián Elías. “Representaciones de la guerra en la actualidad: el caso de Age of Empires II y su campaña del Cid”. *Roda da Fortuna*, 3/1-1 (2014): 590-610.



el estadio del desarrollo tecnológico o la formulación de discursos ideológicos justificadores del conflicto armado. Quizás la afirmación de Espino, según la cual “se podría estudiar dicha sociedad [la que despliega un ejército en un campo de batalla] a todos sus niveles teniendo como punto de partida sus encuentros militares” pueda parecer demasiado rotunda, pero lo cierto es que un asedio, una campaña de destrucción o un choque campal “no deja de ser un compendio de las características, cualidades, defectos, virtudes y límites de la sociedad que lo organizó”.²⁴

3. La historiografía anterior a los años 90 del siglo XX

Quizás la afirmación anterior sobre lo poco que se sabía de las formas de hacer la guerra con anterioridad a la década de los años 90 resulte muy tajante y requiera alguna matización para reducirla a sus justos términos:²⁵ centrándonos ya específicamente en la historiografía sobre los reinos de León y de Castilla, hay que mencionar que antes y ahora, la historiografía tradicional, de corte positivista, así como un buen número de aportaciones realizadas recientemente y sustentadas sobre criterios historiográficos más actualizados, han hecho un enorme esfuerzo para narrar los hechos y la secuencia de los conflictos, tomando como hilo argumental la sucesión de los acontecimientos militares. Baste recordar, a este respecto, las biografías de algunos de los principales monarcas castellano-leoneses, que habitualmente abordan con detalle estas cuestiones, a veces de manera monográfica, así como otras obras más generales en las que la descripción de estos procesos de expansión constituye un argumento central.

Por otra parte, los estudios sobre armamento medieval castellano se beneficiaron tempranamente de la labor del matrimonio Hoffmeyer en el *Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas*: en 1972 y 1982 la propia Ada Bruhn de Hoffmeyer publicó dos importantes monografías sobre armas y armaduras en la España medieval²⁶ y su propuesta no tardó en encontrar eco en el medievalismo hispánico, tanto en el ámbito catalán,²⁷ como en el que aquí interesa, el castellano-leonés, para el que Álvaro Soler del Campo realizó en 1990 una aportación fundamental con su tesis sobre *La evolución del armamento medieval en el reino castellano-leonés y al-Andalus (siglos XII-XIV)*.²⁸

Igualmente, con anterioridad a los primeros años de la década de los noventa del siglo XX, se habían publicado trabajos monográficos sobre algunas campañas particulares, especialmente las protagonizadas por Alfonso VII y Fernando III, dos monarcas de dilatadas e intensas trayectorias

24. Espino, Antonio. “La renovación de la Historia de las Batallas...”: 171.

25. La relación de títulos que aparece en las siguientes notas no pretende ser exhaustiva. Hemos tenido que realizar una selección de trabajos por razones de espacio, de modo que en absoluto son todos los publicados en los últimos años sobre estas materias. Además, aunque hemos procurado ser cuidadosos en la elección, debemos reconocer que no estamos libres de que, por olvido o desconocimiento, alguna obra significativa no haya sido recogida. De ser así, vayan por delante nuestras excusas.

26. Bruhn de Hoffmeyer, Ada. *Arms & Armour in Spain. A Short Survey. Vol. I. The Bronze Age to the End of High Middle Ages*. Madrid: Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas, 1971; Bruhn de Hoffmeyer, Ada. *Arms & Armour in Spain. A Short Survey. Vol. II. From the End of the 12th Century to the Beginnings of the 15th Century*. Madrid: Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas, 1982.

27. Victoria Cirlot, que defendió su tesis doctoral sobre *El armamento catalán de los siglos XII al XIV* en 1980, había estado en estrecho contacto con el citado Instituto (Cirlot, Victoria. *El armamento catalán de los siglos XII al XIV*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona (Tesis doctoral), 1980).

28. Soler, Álvaro. *La evolución del armamento medieval en el reino castellano-leonés y al-Andalus (siglos XII-XIV)*. Madrid: Universidad Complutense (Tesis doctoral), 1991 (publicado en: Soler del Campo, Álvaro, *La evolución del armamento medieval en el reino castellano-leonés y Al-Andalus (siglos XII-XIV)*. Madrid: Servicio de Publicaciones del EME, 1993). También este autor había mantenido fructíferas relaciones con el Instituto de Estudios sobre Armas Antiguas.

militares, que además tienen el privilegio de contar con fuentes contemporáneas bien informadas y relativamente detallistas.²⁹

De la misma forma, debe destacarse la existencia de un número significativo de estudios, como decimos anteriores a los años noventa del pasado siglo, sobre determinadas operaciones militares que tuvieron una especial repercusión en el balance de la guerra entre castellano-leoneses y musulmanes, como fue el caso de los asedios sobre importantes ciudades musulmanas: el de Toledo en 1085, los de Jaén y Sevilla en los años centrales del siglo XIII, o el de Tarifa a finales de esta misma centuria.³⁰ En la mayoría de los casos, no obstante, el interés no está centrado tanto en el análisis de las tácticas y técnicas de asedio, cuanto en la reconstrucción de la secuencia de los acontecimientos.

Pero, sobre todo, los estudios sobre determinadas operaciones y sobre la práctica de la guerra habían puesto el énfasis en las grandes batallas que jalonan el conflicto entre Castilla-León y los imperios norteafricanos —almorávides y almohades— que se hicieron con el control de al-Andalus entre los siglos XI y XIII: de esta forma, la sucesión de grandes choques campales que tuvieron lugar durante estas centurias —Zalaca (1086), Uclés (1108), Alarcos (1195), Las Navas de Tolosa (1212)— venía a resumir, en sí misma, el panorama de la historia militar.³¹

Sin duda alguna, este punto de vista respondía a una larga tradición que se remonta al siglo XIX y cuyos rasgos han sido trazados en varias ocasiones por la historiografía especializada,³² que focalizaba la atención sobre las batallas campales y obviaba el estudio de otras vertientes de la guerra, con lo que se engrandecía la trascendencia de aquellas y se minusvaloraba a éstas. Desde luego,

29. Para Alfonso VII: Díaz, Esperanza; Molina, Providencia. "Las campañas de Alfonso VII en Andalucía: un precedente de la conquista de Córdoba". *Actas del V Coloquio Internacional de Historia Medieval de Andalucía (Córdoba, 27-30 de noviembre de 1986)*, Emilio Cabrera, coord. Córdoba: Diputación Provincial, 1988: 63-70. Para Fernando III: González, Julio. "Las conquistas de Fernando III en Andalucía". *Hispania*, 6 (1946): 515-631; Eslava, Juan. "La campaña de Quesada (1224)". *Cuadernos de Estudios Medievales*, 12-13 (1984): 5-23.

30. Para Toledo: Lévi-Provençal, Evariste. "Alphonse VI et la prise de Tolède (1085)". *Hespéris*, 12 (1931): 33-49; Miranda, José. *La Reconquista de Toledo por Alfonso VI*. Toledo: Instituto de Estudios Visigóticos-Mozárabes de San Eugenio, 1980; Miranda, José. "Reflexiones militares sobre la conquista de Toledo por Alfonso VI", *Estudios sobre Alfonso VI y la reconquista de Toledo: Actas del II Congreso Internacional de Estudios Mozárabes (Toledo, 20-26 de mayo de 1985)*. Toledo: Instituto de Estudios Visigóticos-Mozárabes, 1987: 251-294; Izquierdo, Ricardo. *Alfonso VI y la toma de Toledo*. Toledo: Instituto Provincial de Investigaciones y Estudios Toledanos, 1986. Para Jaén: Ballesteros, Manuel. "La conquista de Jaén por Fernando III". *Cuadernos de Historia de España*, 20 (1953): 63-138. Para Sevilla: González, Julio. *Repartimiento de Sevilla*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1951: I, 141-221; Martínez Valverde, Carlos. "La campaña de Sevilla y su conquista por Fernando III". *Revista de Historia Militar*, 22 (1978): 7-43. Para Tarifa: Gaibrois, Mercedes. "Tarifa y la política de Sancho IV de Castilla". *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, 74 (1919): 418-436, 521-529; 75 (1919): 349-355; 76 (1920): 53-57, 123-160, 420-449; 77 (1920): 192-215.

31. Durante décadas la obra de obligada referencia sobre las grandes batallas de la Reconquista fue el extraordinario trabajo de Ambrosio Huici (Huici, Ambrosio. *Las grandes batallas de la Reconquista durante las invasiones africanas (Almorávides, Almohades y Benimerines)*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1956), en la que se recogen estudios monográficos sobre Zalaca, Uclés, Alarcos, Las Navas y, fuera ya del marco cronológico que aquí tratamos, El Salado (existe una nueva edición, con estudio introductorio de Emilio Molina y Vicente Carlos Navarro en Granada: Huici, Ambrosio. *Las grandes batallas de la Reconquista durante las invasiones africanas (Almorávides, Almohades y Benimerines)*. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2000). Véase también: García Gómez, Emilio; Oliver, Jaime. "Novedades sobre la batalla llamada de al-Zallqa (1086)". *Al-Andalus*, 15 (1950): 111-155; Lagardère, Vicent. *Le vendredi de Zallaqa*. París: L'Harmattan, 1989; Slaughter, John E. "De nuevo sobre la batalla de Uclés". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 9 (1974-1975): 393-404; Martínez Fronce, Félix Manuel. "La dinámica estratégica hacia Uclés y sus puntos de encuentro". *Anales de la Universidad de Alicante. Historia Medieval*, 6 (1987): 75-91; Eslava, Juan. "Tácticas en la batalla de las Navas de Tolosa". *Cuadernos de Estudios Medievales*, 6-7 (1981): 39-53.

32. Las primeras críticas a la consideración de la batalla como centro de la actividad militar de los ejércitos medievales vinieron de la mano de: Smail, Raymond Charles. *Crusading Warfare (1097-1193)*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1956: 12-15 (existe una segunda edición con introducción bibliográfica de Christopher Marshall en Cambridge: Smail, Raymond Charles. *Crusading Warfare (1097-1193)*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1995). Sus postulados forman parte del paradigma historiográfico actual.



los pocos autores no españoles que se habían acercado al análisis de la realidad militar castellano-leonesa de la Edad Media no habían hecho sino reproducir aquellos planteamientos: no deja de ser significativo, por ejemplo, que al analizar el “arte militar” en la España medieval Ferdinand Lot dedicara un buen número de páginas a las principales colisiones en campo abierto —Zalaca, Alarcos, Las Navas de Tolosa—, pero que decidiera no detenerse en el análisis de la conquista de Andalucía por parte de Fernando III alegando expresamente como justificación de su desinterés que ésta había sido una guerra de asedios y no de batallas.³³ La historiografía hispánica no se alejó de estos postulados, de modo que también aquí las batallas fueron consideradas como los puntos de referencia fundamentales de la experiencia militar española. En definitiva, desde la perspectiva bélica, la Reconquista castellano-leonesa, entendida como proceso de expansión territorial, quedaba sustancialmente reducida a una sucesión de batallas campales.³⁴

No obstante, creemos que para valorar ajustadamente la posición de los estudios sobre la guerra plenomedieval en el seno del medievalismo hispano, tan significativo —o tal vez incluso más— como el escaso número de aportaciones o como su sesgo claramente inclinado hacia el análisis de las batallas campales, resulta su escasa proyección en la vida académica. Bastaría con hacer un breve repaso por la bibliografía citada en las grandes obras de síntesis o en los manuales universitarios de Historia Medieval de España, publicados durante los años setenta, ochenta o incluso a principios de los noventa, para comprobar que apenas se recogen dos o tres títulos dedicados a tales temas, lo cual bien puede considerarse no sólo como un signo evidente de su escasez, sino también de su reducida repercusión en la historiografía universitaria. Significativamente, la única obra que se repite con frecuencia es el ya citado libro de Huici sobre las grandes batallas de la Reconquista, que en la práctica se convirtió, por lo menos hasta principios de la década de los 90 del siglo XX, de manera casi exclusiva, en el solitario referente académico de los manuales universitarios para los asuntos relacionados con las tácticas militares, lo cual, por otra parte, también permite comprobar la solidez que todavía entonces tenía la imagen de la batalla campal como sinónimo de guerra medieval.

4. La renovación historiográfica a partir de los años 90

4.1 El impacto de la historiografía francesa y anglosajona

No será hasta los años finales de los 80 cuando lentamente se empiece a despertar el interés de los especialistas por conocer con mayor detalle los planteamientos estratégicos y tácticos realizados por las monarquías y los ejércitos de Castilla y de León en sus conflictos con el Islam durante la Plena Edad Media.³⁵ A este respecto, creemos de absoluta justicia subrayar que los cambios que se

33. Como muestra de esta actitud, valga el contraste entre las 16 páginas dedicadas al estudio de la batalla de Las Navas y las tres en las que se resumen los 30 años de conquista del valle del Guadalquivir. Lot, Ferdinand. *L'art militaire et les armées au Moyen Âge en Europe et dans le Proche Orient*. París: Payot, 1946: II, 162-297.

34. Véase, por ejemplo, lo expresado en: González Simancas, Manuel. *España Militar a principios de la Baja Edad Media: batalla de Las Navas de Tolosa*. Madrid: Talleres del Depósito de la Guerra, 1925: VI-VII; Huici, Ambrosio. *Las grandes batallas de la Reconquista...*: 9.

35. Quisiéramos subrayar que este estado de la cuestión se centra exclusivamente en los estudios sobre las formas de combatir, las estrategias y las tácticas en la Castilla-León plenomedieval, dejando al margen la importante producción historiográfica referida tanto a la Alta como a la Baja Edad Media, así como otros aspectos de la guerra que en los últimos años han recibido igualmente la atención de los especialistas y han experimentado un desarrollo notable, tales como el papel de las Órdenes Militares, los castellológicos, los arqueológicos, los organizativos o los ideológicos. Todos ellos merecen específicos estados de la cuestión.

han producido en este campo del medievalismo español están muy relacionados con los trabajos de algunos autores franceses cuyos textos se conocían en España desde la década de los años setenta y principios de los ochenta, caso de Georges Duby y Philippe Contamine.³⁶

Pero, sobre todo, la señalada renovación historiográfica³⁷ es fuertemente deudora de la extraordinaria corriente que, sobre estos temas, se ha venido desarrollando en el ámbito anglosajón a lo largo de toda la segunda mitad del siglo XX: hace ahora seis décadas, los estudios sobre las formas de hacer la guerra daban un salto cualitativo en la historiografía británica y conseguían integrarse plenamente en el horizonte del medievalismo universitario. La obra, ya clásica y consagrada, de Raymond Charles Smail sobre la guerra durante las Cruzadas de los siglos XI y XII, fue la impulsora del citado salto y fue también la que más tempranamente influyó en la producción hispánica interesada en el análisis de los combates: quizás Eslava, en los últimos años de la década de los setenta, fuera el primero en constatar que algunas de las afirmaciones de Smail resultaban muy útiles para entender el comportamiento táctico de las fuerzas que se enfrentaron en Las Navas de Tolosa, si bien fue a mediados de los ochenta cuando comenzó a vislumbrarse en España que el gran especialista británico ofrecía, más allá de algunos datos concretos muy significativos, un verdadero modelo de explicación cuya aplicación resultaba viable para estudiar la realidad militar de la Península Ibérica, como se constató al abordar, desde esta nueva perspectiva, los consejos bélicos ofrecidos por Don Juan Manuel en sus obras.³⁸

Tras la obra de Smail vendría toda una fructífera línea de investigación que en las siguientes décadas, aunque sobre todo desde finales de los años ochenta y los primeros noventa, ha continuado desarrollando sus propuestas metodológicas. Historiadores como Reginal Allen Brown, John Gillingham, Bernard Bachrach, Christopher Marshall, Matthew Strickland, Randall Rogers, Jim Bradbury, John France, Michael Prestwich, Stephen Morillo, Matthew Bennett, Kelly DeVries, Clifford Rogers o David Nicolle han seguido, directa o indirectamente, aquella estela, abriendo un campo de investigación específico dentro del medievalismo de habla inglesa y estableciendo unos modelos de análisis que, insistentemente, demostraron ser perfectamente aplicables a los escenarios hispánicos.

36. De Georges Duby, el libro que tendría un impacto más temprano en la historiografía española interesada en estos temas fue: Duby, George. *Le dimanche de Bouvines-27 juillet 1214*. París: Gallimard, 1973. La influencia de Philippe Contamine llegaría a través de dos grandes obras: Contamine, Philippe. *Guerre, Etat et société à la fin du Moyen Âge. Etudes sur les armées des rois de France, 1337-1494*. París: Mouton, 1972; Contamine, Philippe, *La guerre au Moyen Âge*. París: Presses Universitaires de France, 1980. Todas ellas comenzaron a circular muy pronto en España, antes desde luego de que aparecieran ediciones en español.

37. La idea de que los estudios sobre la guerra medieval hispánica han experimentado una profunda renovación a partir de la década de los años 90 del siglo XX ha sido señalada en diversas ocasiones por aquellos especialistas que han tenido la oportunidad de reflexionar sobre la evolución reciente de estos estudios. A veces se ha llegado incluso a utilizar el concepto de “nueva historia militar” para calificar a la producción historiográfica sobre estos temas desarrollada en España a partir de la citada fecha. Véase, por ejemplo: Gouveia Monteiro, João. “Estratégia e risco em Aljubarrota: a decisão de dar batalha à luz do ‘paradigma Gillingham’”, *A Guerra e a Sociedade na Idade Média. VI Jornadas Luso-Espanholas de Estudos Medievais (Alcobaça - Batalha - Porto de Mós, 6-8 de Novembro de 2008)*. Coimbra: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos Medievais-Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2009: I, 79; Orsi, Mario. “La guerra en la Corona de Aragón...”: 568; Arias, Fernando. “The Many Histories of Medieval Spain”. *The Medieval Journal*, 2 (2012): 85-86; Rodríguez García, José Manuel. “Reconquista y cruzada. Un balance historiográfico doce años después (2000-2012)”. *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie III. Historia Medieval*, 26 (2013): 389.

38. Eslava, Juan. “Tácticas en la batalla de las Navas de Tolosa...”: 39-53; García Fitz, Francisco. “La guerra en la obra de Don Juan Manuel”, *Estudios sobre Málaga y reino de Granada en el V Centenario de su conquista*, José Enrique López de Coca, ed. Málaga: Diputación Provincial, 1987: 55-72.



Aunque el conjunto de los trabajos de estos autores, y de otros que comenzaron a publicar los suyos poco después, ha ejercido una influencia notable sobre la historiografía hispánica especializada, lo cierto es que la recepción de algunos de ellos en particular tuvo en su momento un impacto determinante entre los medievalistas españoles —todavía pocos— que, desde mediados de la década de los años ochenta, venían mostrando un creciente interés hacia estas cuestiones y trabajando en estas líneas de investigación. A este respecto, creemos que cabría destacar al menos cuatro grandes aportaciones que sirvieron como modelo y estímulo para el estudio del caso ibérico: en primer lugar, la monografía que Christopher Marshall publicó en 1992 sobre la guerra en el Este Latino durante el siglo XIII, una continuación cronológica del trabajo de Raymond Charles Smail, que proporcionaba un espléndido ejemplo de lo que podía y debía hacerse a la hora de estudiar la realidad militar de los fronteras occidentales de la Cristiandad; en segundo lugar, los tres magistrales artículos de John Gillingham —sobre Ricardo Corazón de León, Guillermo el Bastardo y Guillermo el Mariscal— que Matthew Strickland tuvo el acierto de seleccionar y publicar conjuntamente en su *Anglo-Norman Warfare*, editada igualmente en 1992, unos trabajos que, con el paso del tiempo, conformarían lo que ha terminado conociéndose como “el paradigma Gillingham”; en tercer lugar, el análisis de John France sobre las raíces de la victoria de los cruzados en el Este, publicado dos años más tarde, cuyas explicaciones trascendían el ambiente oriental y podían trasladarse a Occidente; por último, el estudio que Stephen Morillo le dedicó a la guerra en el mundo anglosajón, editado igualmente en 1994.³⁹

4.2 Las batallas campales: el inevitable atractivo de los sucesos extraordinarios

Sin duda, la influencia de estos textos ha sido decisiva en la renovación que, como ya hemos apuntado, se ha producido en la historiografía hispánica sobre estas materias en el ámbito del reino de Castilla y León entre los siglos XI y XIII. Pues bien, en el marco de esta transformación, quizás lo primero que llama la atención es que los estudios de algunas grandes confrontaciones en campo abierto han seguido estando muy presentes en la producción española especializada, sólo que ahora las formas de análisis y las perspectivas de estudio que se han abierto, unas y otras en conexión con las tendencias más recientes y innovadoras de las historiografías anglosajona y francesa, han permitido superar la mera narración de los acontecimientos para entrar en la investigación pormenorizada de los componentes de los ejércitos, del papel estratégico de las batallas en el contexto general de la expansión territorial, de las formaciones tácticas, de los movimientos de las fuerzas o de las mentalidades e ideologías de los protagonistas y de los autores que dieron cuenta de los actos y palabras de aquellos.

En este sentido, cabe señalar que las diversas reuniones científicas celebradas en 1995 con motivo del centenario de la batalla de Alarcos contribuyeron a dar un nuevo impulso al estudio específico de este choque y al de las circunstancias generales que lo rodearon, poniendo en valor algunas

39. Marshall, Christopher. *J. Warfare in the Latin East, 1192-1291*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1992; Gillingham, John. “Richard I and the Science of War...”: 199-207; Gillingham, John. “William the Bastard at War”, *Anglo-Norman Warfare. Studies in late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman military organization and warfare*, Matthew Strickland, ed. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992: 143-160; Gillingham, John. “War and Chivalry in the History of William the Marshall”, *Anglo-Norman Warfare. Studies in late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman military organization and warfare*, Matthew Strickland, ed. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992: 251-263; France, John. *Victory in the East. A military history of the First Crusade*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1994; Morillo, Stephen. *Warfare under the Anglo-Norman Kings. 1066-1136*. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1994.

fuentes que casi nunca antes se habían utilizado en estudios de este tipo –caso de la arqueología– y dando paso a nuevas maneras de abordar el fenómeno.⁴⁰

Sin embargo quizás la batalla campal que en mayor medida se ha beneficiado de este renovado interés por el análisis de la realidad militar ha sido la de Las Navas de Tolosa: sin duda, los trabajos de Martín Alvira Cabrer, publicados durante los años centrales de la década de los años noventa, antecipos de su Tesis Doctoral defendida en el año 2000, marcaron un punto de inflexión en el conocimiento que hoy día tenemos de la batalla y abrieron nuevos horizontes para la investigación histórica aplicada al estudio de la guerra, poniendo un especial énfasis, a partir de los modelos de interpretación propuestos por George Duby, en el universo de la mentalidad e ideología bélicas en el marco de una gran colisión frontal en campo abierto.⁴¹

La riqueza de las fuentes relacionadas con esta batalla y las amplias posibilidades de estudio que presentan han permitido que varias monografías se hayan sumado a las anteriores desde otros enfoques más relacionados con la logística, el armamento, las tácticas o la organización de los ejércitos enfrentados, procurando en algún caso ofrecer las contextualizaciones necesarias para que cada uno de los elementos, factores y circunstancias concretas que intervinieron en el combate pueda insertarse con mayor facilidad en los modos generales de hacer la guerra en el Occidente medieval.⁴² Además, tampoco conviene olvidar que el análisis de la campaña del verano de 1212 ofrece un caso paradigmático para el estudio de la ideología, de la práctica y de la cultura de cruzada en el siglo XIII.⁴³

Este elenco de trabajos, ya de por sí bastante amplio en número y perspectivas de análisis, se ha visto enriquecido a raíz de las conmemoraciones que, a lo largo del año 2012, se celebraron con motivo del octavo centenario de Las Navas de Tolosa, si bien la mayoría de las contribuciones no estuvieron centradas en el análisis de las tácticas y las formas de combate. De un lado, varias

40. Zozaya, Juan, ed. *Alarcos 95. El fiel de la balanza*. Toledo: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Junta de Comunidades de Castilla-La Mancha, 1995; Izquierdo, Ricardo; Ruiz, Francisco, coords. *Alarcos 1195: Actas del congreso internacional conmemorativo del VIII centenario de la Batalla de Alarcos (Ciudad Real, 3-6 de abril de 1995)*. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 1996. Con anterioridad a estas conmemoraciones se había publicado alguna aproximación interesante, como fue la de: Muñoz, Juan; Pérez de Tudela, María Isabel. “La batalla de Alarcos”. *Ejército*, 643 (1993): 60-69; y recientemente ha visto la luz una interesante síntesis sobre este enfrentamiento campal: Ruiz Moreno, Manuel Jesús. *La batalla de Alarcos, 1195*. Madrid: Almena, 2015.

41. Alvira, Martín. “Dimensiones religiosas y liturgia de la batalla plenomedieval: Las Navas de Tolosa, 16 de julio de 1212”. *XX Siglos*, 19 (1994): 33-46; Alvira, Martín. “La muerte del enemigo en el Pleno Medioevo: cifras e ideología (el modelo de Las Navas de Tolosa)”. *Hispania*, 55/2, 190 (1995): 403-424; Alvira, Martín. “De Alarcos a Las Navas de Tolosa: Idea y realidad de los orígenes de la batalla de 1212”. *Alarcos 1195. Actas del congreso internacional conmemorativo del VIII centenario de la Batalla de Alarcos (Ciudad Real, 3-6 de abril de 1995)*, Ricardo Izquierdo, Francisco Ruiz, coords. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 1996: 249-264; Alvira, Martín. “El desafío del *Miramamolín* antes de la batalla de Las Navas de Tolosa (1212). Fuentes, datación y posibles orígenes”. *Al-Qantara*, 18/2 (1997): 463-490; Alvira, Martín. *Guerra e ideología en la España medieval: cultura y actitudes históricas ante el giro de principios del siglo XIII. Batallas de Las Navas (1212) y Muret (1213)*. Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Tesis doctoral), 2000.

42. Vara, Carlos. *El Lunes de Las Navas*. Jaén: Universidad de Jaén, 1999; Rosado, María Dolores y López Payer, Manuel. *La batalla de las Navas de Tolosa. Historia y Mito*. Jaén: Caja Rural de Jaén, 2001; López Payer, Manuel; Rosado, María Dolores. *La batalla de Las Navas de Tolosa*. Madrid: Almena, 2002; García Fitz, Francisco. *Las Navas de Tolosa*. Barcelona: Ariel, 2005.

43. Holt, Edward Lawrence. *Out of Many, One?: the voice(s) in the crusade ideology of Las Navas de Tolosa*. Durham: Duke University (Tesis doctoral), 2010; Holt, Edward Lawrence. “Out of Many, One?: the voice(s) in the crusade ideology of Las Navas de Tolosa”. Duke University. 15 septiembre 2015 <http://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/10161/2518/Holt_Edward_Thesis_final.pdf?sequence=1>; Gómez, Miguel Dolan. *The Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa: The Culture and Practice of Crusading in Medieval Iberia*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee (Tesis doctoral), 2011; Gómez, Miguel Dolan. “The Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa: The Culture and Practice of Crusading in Medieval Iberia”. University of Tennessee. 15 septiembre 2015 <http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_graddiss/1079>.



fueron las reuniones científicas de nivel nacional e internacional que, aprovechando la efeméride, contribuyeron a ampliar los conocimientos no ya solo sobre la batalla, sino también sobre el crucial momento histórico en el que la misma tuvo lugar y que marcaría un hito tanto en el ámbito ibérico como en el europeo y el magrebí.⁴⁴ De otro lado, la conmemoración de la batalla no solo propició la publicación de algunos trabajos de síntesis y divulgación⁴⁵ y la reedición de varios títulos, alguno de ellos, como el de Huici, verdaderamente clásico e imprescindible en la materia a pesar de los años transcurridos desde su primera edición,⁴⁶ sino que además algunas revistas le consagraron secciones o números monográficos.⁴⁷ Por último, pero quizás más relevante por lo que respecta a nuestros conocimientos sobre Las Navas de Tolosa, la conmemoración de la batalla coincidió con la publicación de la más importante monografía dedicada a este choque campal en las últimas décadas, de la pluma de Martín Alvira Cabrer.⁴⁸

Aunque pudiera parecer, tanto por la cantidad como por la calidad de los trabajos relacionados con las batallas campales publicados en las últimas dos décadas,⁴⁹ que estas siguen siendo el eje vertebrador de la actividad bélica, lo cierto es que, paradójicamente, lo que han puesto de manifiesto algunos de estos estudios y lo que la mayoría de los autores reconocen a estas alturas, es que aque-

44. Ya en 2010 la XXXVII edición de la *Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella* se dedicó a reflexionar sobre 1212-1214. *El trienio que hizo a Europa*. A lo largo de 2012 hay que destacar las reuniones científicas celebradas en Jaén, Nájera, Baeza y en el marco del 47th International Congress on Medieval Studies, organizado por el Medieval Institute de la Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo (USA), donde se dedicaron cuatro de sus sesiones al estudio de la batalla. La conferencia cuatrianual de la *Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, celebrada en Cáceres entre el 25 y el 29 de junio de 2012, también sirvió para conmemorar la batalla. Con excepción de dos estos últimos, de cuyas publicaciones no tenemos noticia hasta la fecha, los resultados de estos encuentros se fueron editando en años posteriores: 1212-1214. *El trienio que hizo a Europa*. XXXVII Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella (19 al 23 de julio de 2010). Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 2011; López Ojeda, Esther, coord. 1212, un año, un reinado, un tiempo de despegue. XXIII Semana de Estudios Medievales (Nájera, 30 de julio al 3 de agosto de 2012). Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2013; Cressier, Patrice; Salvatierra, Vicente, eds. *Las Navas de Tolosa. 1212-2012. Miradas Cruzadas*. Jaén: Universidad de Jaén, 2014; Estepa, Carlos; Carmona, María Antonia coords. *La Península Ibérica en tiempo de Las Navas de Tolosa*. Madrid: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2014.

45. Pavón, Julia; Arzo, Iñigo. 1212. *La batalla de Las Navas de Tolosa. Ocho siglos después*. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 2012.

46. Huici, Ambrosio. *Estudios sobre la campaña de Las Navas de Tolosa*, Roldán Jimeno, ed. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2011 (la primera edición es de 1916); Melo, Diego, ed. *Dos estudios en torno a La batalla de al-Iqāb o Las Navas de Tolosa (1212) en al-Andalus: los reinos cristianos de la Península Ibérica frente a los Almohades*. Coquimbo: Centro Mohammed VI para el Diálogo de Civilizaciones, 2012 (incluye publicaciones: García Fitz, Francisco. "Las Navas de Tolosa, ¿un punto de inflexión en las dinámicas históricas peninsulares?", *Dos estudios en torno a La batalla de al-Iqāb o Las Navas de Tolosa (1212) en al-Andalus: los reinos cristianos de la Península Ibérica frente a los Almohades*, Diego Melo, ed. Coquimbo: Centro Mohammed VI para el Diálogo de Civilizaciones, 2012: 11-58; Vidal, Francisco. "Al-Iqāb: Las Navas de Tolosa en las fuentes árabes", *Dos estudios en torno a La batalla de al-Iqāb o Las Navas de Tolosa (1212) en al-Andalus: los reinos cristianos de la Península Ibérica frente a los Almohades*, Diego Melo, ed. Coquimbo: Centro Mohammed VI para el Diálogo de Civilizaciones, 2012: 65-78).

47. Es el caso de: Fernández de Córdoba, Álvaro, ed. "Cristianismo e Islam en el siglo de las Navas de Tolosa (1212)". *Anuario de Historia de la Iglesia*, 20 (2011): 101-362; Doubleday, Simon; Gómez, Miguel, eds. "On (de)commemoration: rethinking the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa". *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, 4/1 (2012): 1-134; "La batalla de las Navas de Tolosa o al-Iqāb (1212)". *Alcazaba. Revista Histórico-Cultural*, 12-13 (2012-2013): 45-138.

48. Partiendo de sus trabajos anteriores, y en particular de su tesis doctoral leída en 2000, en 2012 este autor publicó una excepcional monografía, sin duda el estudio más completo de las últimas décadas sobre esta batalla: Alvira, Martín. *Las Navas de Tolosa, 1212. Idea, liturgia y memoria de la batalla*. Madrid: Sílex, 2012.

49. A lo ya indicado, habría que sumar el estudio monográfico sobre las batallas cidianas publicado en 2005 por Montaner y Boix (Montaner, Alberto; Boix, Alfonso. *Guerra en Šarq Al-andalus: las batallas cidianas de Morella (1084) y Cuarte (1094)*. Zaragoza: Instituto de Estudios Islámicos y del Próximo Oriente, 2005) y recordar, además, que el estudio de la batalla de Las Navas y sus circunstancias no han dejado de suscitar interés y de generar nuevas propuestas de interpretación después de las conmemoraciones de 2012, así por ejemplo en: Peinado Santaella, Rafael. "El pastor de Las Navas o trampa ideológica de una imagen de cruzada", *La literatura no ha existido siempre. Para Juan Carlos Rodríguez, teoría, historia, invención*, Miguel Ángel García, Ángela Olalla, Andrés Soria, coords. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2015: 439-453.

llos acontecimientos eran excepcionales en el panorama bélico, aunque su impacto sobre los contemporáneos y sobre la memoria que se creaba a su paso fuera verdaderamente extraordinario.⁵⁰

4.3 La lucha por el control del espacio: asedios, fronteras, fortificaciones y guerra de desgaste

De hecho, lo que ha venido a demostrarse en los trabajos más recientes es que la guerra medieval, especialmente aquella que tenía incidencia sobre el control del territorio —caso paradigmático de la expansión de los reinos cristianos peninsulares a costa del Islam—, giraba fundamentalmente en torno al dominio de los puntos fuertes que articulaban el espacio —castillos, ciudades amuralladas...—, por lo que no es de extrañar el impulso que han recibido los estudios no sólo sobre asedios, sino también sobre la funcionalidad militar de las fortalezas.

De nuevo, la producción posterior a la década de los años noventa ha vuelto sobre el examen particular de asedios de grandes ciudades que ya habían sido estudiados en décadas anteriores, si bien ahora las aportaciones no se limitan a una narración lineal de los hechos, sino que entran de lleno en el análisis de los mismos desde perspectivas comparativistas, insertando los cercos en el contexto general de los modos de hacer la guerra y conducir las campañas, y desde otros ángulos débilmente contemplados por la historiografía anterior, tales como el de la logística, el abastecimiento, la financiación, la tecnología o los movimientos tácticos.

Algunos casos concretos, gracias a la generosidad de las fuentes, han podido ser analizados con detalle y han permitido plasmar verdaderos modelos de actuación: el asedio de Sevilla de 1248 representa, para la corona castellano-leonesa, un caso que ha permitido abordar y contemplar, como si de una atalaya se tratase, las formas de conducción de los cercos, las *técnicas* y los sistemas de combate, el armamento y la tecnología expugnatoria, o la composición y volumen de un ejército plenomedieval organizado para hacer frente al enorme reto de conquistar una gran ciudad. La celebración del 750 aniversario de su anexión en 1998 fue una excusa perfecta para ahondar en un fenómeno militar de enorme trascendencia histórica.⁵¹

Por su singularidad, las máquinas y técnicas de expugnación empleados en los grandes cercos han recibido estudios específicos que se han centrado no sólo en su descripción, tipología y funcionamiento, sino también en la función que las mismas desplegaban durante un cerco, en el análisis de su eficacia y en la valoración de su utilidad.⁵²

Por otra parte, también han empezado a publicarse trabajos que ofrecen visiones de conjunto sobre la guerra de asedio en la Península Ibérica y que, trascendiendo los casos particulares, procu-

50. García Fitz, Francisco. "La batalla de Las Navas de Tolosa: el impacto de un acontecimiento extraordinario", *Las Navas de Tolosa. 1212-2012. Miradas Cruzadas*, Patrice Cressier, Vicente Salvatierra, eds. Jaén: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Jaén, 2014: 11-36.

51. García Fitz, Francisco. "El cerco de Sevilla: reflexiones sobre la guerra de asedio en la Edad Media", *Sevilla, 1248. Congreso Internacional conmemorativo del 750 aniversario de la conquista de Sevilla por Fernando III, Rey de Castilla y León (Sevilla, 23-27 de noviembre de 1998)*, Manuel González Jiménez, coord. Sevilla: Fundación Areces, 2000: 115-154. Véase también una aportación divulgativa a cargo de: García Fernández, Manuel. "1248. La conquista de Sevilla". *Desperta Ferro*, 13 (2012): 44-49.

52. García Fitz, Francisco. "Tecnología militar y guerra de asedios. La experiencia castellano-leonesa, siglos XI al XIII", *Military Studies in Medieval Europe*, Guy de Boe, Frans Verhaeghe, eds. Zellik: Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium, 1997: 33-41; García Fitz, Francisco. "¿Machinis validas? Tipología y funcionalidad de las máquinas de asedio en el medievo hispano. Castilla-León, siglos XI al XIII", *Actas del III Congreso de Castellología Ibérica (Guadalajara, 28 de octubre-1 de noviembre de 2005)*, Amador Ruibal, coord. Guadalajara: Asociación Española de Amigos de los Castillos-Diputación de Guadalajara, 2005: 219-254.



ran analizar este tipo de operaciones dentro de marcos cronológicos o espaciales más amplios, que en todo caso engloban al ámbito castellano-leonés. Por ejemplo, para el siglo XII, Randall Rogers propuso una amplia contextualización de los grandes cercos hispánicos dentro del panorama general del mundo mediterráneo, lo que le permitió poner en la adecuada perspectiva las conquistas de Mallorca, Zaragoza, Lisboa, Almería o Tortosa.⁵³

La conflictividad armada entre cristianos y musulmanes, su marcado carácter territorial y de lucha por el control del espacio, y la centralidad de los puntos fuertes en el desarrollo de las confrontaciones exigía una nueva mirada sobre aquellos ámbitos geopolíticos en los que la colisión resultaba más patente y cotidiana, esto es, sobre las fronteras entre ambos mundos. Es evidente que en estas áreas las formas de los conflictos se vieron fuertemente condicionadas por el alto grado de fortificación del territorio, de ahí que en los últimos años los especialistas hayan abordado dos realidades interconectadas: en primer lugar, al análisis de la funcionalidad bélica de las fortificaciones, poniendo de manifiesto que la vertiente defensiva de las mismas, que siempre había sido resaltada por la historiografía, se complementaba con otras funciones de corte claramente ofensivas que resultaban esenciales para la materialización de los proyectos de expansión territorial en el marco fronterizo.⁵⁴

53. Rogers, Randall. *Latin Siege Warfare in the Twelfth Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. Para el mismo período véase también: Powers, James. "Life on the Cutting Edge: The Besieged Town on the Luso-Hispanic Frontier in the Twelfth Century", *The Medieval City under Siege*, Ivy A. Corfis, Michael Wolfe, eds. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1995: 17-34.

54. Castrillo, María Concepción. *La tenencia de fortalezas en la Corona de Castilla durante la Baja Edad Media (Relaciones de poder entre monarquía, nobleza y ciudades). Siglos XIII-XV*. Madrid: Universidad Complutense (Tesis doctoral), 1997; García Fitz, Francisco. "Pora acrecentamiento de nuestros reynos. Las funciones ofensivas de los castillos de frontera", *La fortaleza medieval. Realidad y Símbolo*, José Antonio Barrio, José Vicente Cabezueto, eds. Alicante: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 1998: 75-89; García Fitz, Francisco. "Funciones bélicas de las fortificaciones en el Medievo Extremeño". *Castillos de España*, 118 (2000): 13-25; García Fitz, Francisco. "El 'reflejo obsidional' y su plasmación en la normativa medieval castellano-leonesa de la Plena Edad Media", *III Estudios de Frontera: Convivencia, defensa y comunicación en la Frontera (Alcalá la Real, 18 al 20 de noviembre de 1999)*. Jaén: Diputación Provincial, 2000: 269-292; García Fitz, Francisco. "Guerra y fortificaciones en contextos de frontera. Algunos casos hispánicos de la Plena Edad Media", *Simpósio Internacional sobre Castelos. Mil Anos de Fortificações na Península Ibérica e no Magreb (500-1500) (Palmela, 3-8 abril 2000)*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisboa: Colibri, 2002: 519-532; García Fitz, Francisco. "Guerra y fortificación en el Medievo hispánico", *El castillo medieval en tiempos de Alfonso X el Sabio*, Ángel Luis Molina, Jorge A. Eiroa, eds. Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 2009: 41-76; Molénat, Jean-Pierre. "Des fortifications islamiques aux fortifications d'époque chrétienne dans la région de Tolède à travers les textes, du IX^e au XV^e siècle", *Simpósio Internacional sobre Castelos. Mil Anos de Fortificações na Península Ibérica e no Magreb (500-1500) (Palmela, 3-8 abril 2000)*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisboa: Colibri, 2002: 251-258; Molero, Jesús; Arcos, María del Carmen; Molina, Manuel. "Vigilar caminos, defender la frontera: la fortaleza almohade de Miraflores (Piedrabuena, Ciudad Real)", *Las Navas de Tolosa. 1212-2012. Miradas Cruzadas*, Patrice Cressier, Vicente Salvatierra, eds. Jaén: Universidad de Jaén, 2014: 577-591; Palacios, J. Santiago. *Fortalezas y poder político. Castillos del reino de Toledo*. Guadalajara: Aache, 2008: 185-240; Rodríguez-Picavea, Enrique. "Fortalezas y organización territorial en el Campo de Calatrava (siglos XII-XV)", *Simpósio Internacional sobre Castelos. Mil Anos de Fortificações na Península Ibérica e no Magreb (500-1500) (Palmela, 3-8 abril 2000)*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisboa: Colibri, 2002: 623-632; Valera, Enrique. *La fortaleza medieval: simbolismo y poder en la Edad Media*. Ávila: Junta de Castilla y León, 2002: 79-158. En particular sobre las funciones de las fortalezas fronterizas controladas por las órdenes militares y el papel de estas instituciones en contextos de frontera véase: Ayala, Carlos de. "Las fortalezas castellanas de la Orden de Calatrava en el siglo XII". *En la España Medieval*, 16 (1993): 9-35; Ayala, Carlos de. "Las órdenes militares castellano-leonesas y la acción de frontera en el siglo XIII", *Identidad y representación de la frontera en la España medieval (siglos XI-XIV)*, Carlos de Ayala, Pascal Buresi, Philippe Josseland, eds. Madrid: Casa de Velázquez-Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2001: 123-157; Ayala, Carlos de. *Las órdenes militares hispánicas en la Edad Media (siglos XII-XV)*. Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2003: 561-590; Ayala, Carlos de. "Frontera y Órdenes Militares en la Edad Media castellano-leonesa (siglos XII-XIII)". *Studia Histórica. Historia Medieval*, 24 (2006): 87-112; Forey, Alan. "The Military Orders and the Spanish Reconquest in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries". *Traditio*, 40 (1984): 197-234; Rodríguez-Picavea, Enrique. *Los monjes guerreros en los reinos hispánicos. Las órdenes militares en la Península Ibérica durante la Edad Media*. Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, 2008: 154-165; Ruibal, Amador. "Funciones de las fortalezas en los territorios de las 'órdenes militares'", *II Estudios de Frontera. Actividad y vida en la Frontera (Alcalá la Real, 19-22 de noviembre de 1997)*. Jaén: Diputación Provincial, 1998: 709-718; Ruiz Gómez, Francisco. "Las huestes de las órdenes militares", *Las Órdenes Militares en la Península Ibérica*, Ricardo

En segundo lugar, aquella constatación ha empujado a diversos autores a ahondar en el estudio de las relaciones e interconexiones de orden militar, político, fiscal, logístico y visual existentes entre las distintas fortalezas, lo que ha permitido hablar de sistemas, redes o estructuras castrales. Aunque la presencia de relaciones de muy diverso tipo entre muchos de los puntos fuertes asentados en un mismo espacio fronterizo no se cuestiona, se ha desarrollado un largo debate en torno a la forma en que la existencia de aquellas interconexiones podría haber determinado la acción bélica de las distintas guarniciones fronterizas. En muchas ocasiones, la idea de que las redes de fortalezas de frontera habrían funcionado como verdaderos sistemas o líneas defensivas pensadas para impedir, detener o bloquear invasiones ha sobrevalorado un buen número de trabajos dedicados a estas cuestiones, si bien una acción tan compleja como una actuación coordinada de esta naturaleza parece incompatible con los medios humanos habitualmente disponibles en las fortalezas de frontera y con los modos de hacer y concebir la guerra durante este período.⁵⁵

Izquierdo, Francisco Ruiz Gómez, coords. Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2000: 416-426; Valera, Enrique. "Salvatierra: simbolismo y poder en una fortaleza de la Orden de Calatrava", *Simpósio Internacional sobre Castelos. Mil Anos de Fortificações na Península Ibérica e no Magreb (500-1500) (Palmela, 3-8 abril 2000)*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisboa: Colibri, 2002: 633-648.

55. Desde 1995, con una periodicidad bianual, se celebran en Alcalá la Real (Jaén) unas jornadas científicas centradas en el estudio del mundo de las fronteras medievales que se vienen publicando bajo el título genérico de *Estudios de Frontera*, coordinados por José Rodríguez Molina y Francisco Toro Ceballos. En este marco han ido apareciendo un buen número de trabajos que se han acercado al estudio de los sistemas defensivos fronterizos, en particular los II y los III *Estudios de Frontera*, citados en la nota anterior, y los V *Estudios de Frontera. Funciones de la red castral fronteriza (Alcalá la Real, 14-15 de noviembre de 2003)*. Jaén: Diputación Provincial, 2004. También pueden encontrarse trabajos interesantes en los volúmenes que recogen los resultados de los dos grandes simposios sobre fortificaciones celebrados en Palmela (Portugal) en 2000 y 2010: *Simpósio Internacional sobre Castelos. Mil Anos de Fortificações na Península Ibérica e no Magreb (500-1500)*, citado en la nota previa, y *Fortificações e Território na Península Ibérica e no Magreb - Séculos VI a XVI*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisboa: Edições Colibri-Campo Arqueológico de Mértola, 2013. Las aportaciones sobre organización del espacio, fronteras y fortificaciones se remontan a mediados de los años 80, como puede comprobarse en algunos títulos que recogemos a continuación, si bien será durante la década de los noventa cuando se multiplican. Específicamente para el espacio castellano-leonés en el período que aquí contemplamos, véase: Alcázar, Eva. "Las fortificaciones del concejo fronterizo de Jaén. Siglos XIII-XV", *Fortificações e Território na Península Ibérica e no Magreb - Séculos VI a XVI*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisbon: Edições Colibri-Campo Arqueológico de Mértola, 2013: 199-208; Bernal, Ángel. "La frontera en la Extremadura histórica medieval: convivencia y enfrentamientos bélicos", *II Estudios de Frontera. Actividad y vida en la Frontera (Alcalá la Real, 19-22 de noviembre de 1997)*. Jaén: Diputación Provincial, 1998: 125-138; Castillo, Juan Carlos. "Sistemas fronterizos en la Campiña Giennense". *Arqueología Espacial*, 13 (1989): 207-218; Clemente, Julián. "La Extremadura musulmana (1142-1248). Organización defensiva y sociedad". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 24 (1994): 647-701; Clemente, Julián; Montaña, Juan Luis de la. "La Extremadura cristiana (1142-1230). Ocupación del espacio y transformaciones socioeconómicas". *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos*, 21 (1994): 87-103; Galbán, Carlos J. "En ese país que por siglos fue el final de la tierra. Una aproximación a los orígenes del sistema castral del obispado de Iria-Santiago (ss. IX-XI)". *Territorio, Sociedad y Poder*, 8 (2013): 85-103; García Fitz, Francisco. "La defensa de la frontera del Bajo Guadalquivir ante las invasiones benimerines del siglo XIII". *Relaciones de la Península Ibérica con el Magreb (siglos XIII-XVI)*, Mercedes García Arenal, María Jesús Viguera, eds. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1988: 275-325; García Fitz, Francisco. "Fortificaciones, fronteras y sistemas defensivos en al-Andalus, siglos XI al XIII", *Actas del I Congreso Internacional sobre "Fortificaciones en al-Andalus" (Algeciras, 29-30 noviembre y 1 diciembre 1996)*. Algeciras: Ayuntamiento de Algeciras-Fundación Municipal de Cultura "José Luis Cano", 1998: 269-280; García Fitz, Francisco. "Guerra y fortificaciones en la Plena Edad Media peninsular: Una reflexión en torno a la existencia y funcionalidad bélica de los 'sistemas defensivos'", *V Estudios de Frontera. Funciones de la red castral fronteriza (Alcalá la Real, 14-15 de noviembre de 2003)*. Jaén: Diputación Provincial, 2004: 223-242; García Fitz, Francisco. "El sistema castral sevillano en la Baja Edad Media", *Fortificações e Território na Península Ibérica e no Magreb - Séculos VI a XVI*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisboa: Edições Colibri-Campo Arqueológico de Mértola, 2013: 569-588; García Oliva, María Dolores. "Un espacio sin poder: la Transierra Extremeña durante la época musulmana". *Studia Historica. Historia Medieval*, 25 (2007): 89-120; Gallego, David. "Un espacio fortificado: el Campo de Montiel en tiempo de Las Navas (1150-1250)". *La Península Ibérica en tiempo de Las Navas de Tolosa*, Carlos Estepa, María Antonia Carmona, coords. Madrid: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2014: 155-166; Gutiérrez Calderón, María Victoria; Castillo, Juan Carlos. "El control del territorio en la comunidad de villa y tierra de Baeza (Jaén): apuntes desde la arqueología espacial", *Fortificações e Território na Península Ibérica e no Magreb - Séculos VI a XVI*, Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, coord. Lisboa: Edições Colibri-Campo Arqueológico de Mértola, 2013: 227-242; Molero, Jesús M. "Sistemas de defensa y control en el Campo de San Juan: del dominio musulmán al cris-



Los estudios sobre los grandes procesos de expansión político-militar protagonizados por la sociedad europea occidental de la Edad Media han puesto de relieve que, salvo algunas excepciones particularmente llamativas, las grandes conquistas territoriales fueron consecuencia de una exitosa estrategia de anexiones y expugnaciones de puntos fuertes, como ocurrió en Tierra Santa, por ejemplo. En la Península Ibérica las cosas no fueron diferentes, como demuestran los trabajos anteriormente citados y referidos a grandes cercos de ciudades amuralladas, o bien algunos que han estudiado con detalle otras formas más simples de conquistas, basadas en la rapidez, la nocturnidad y la sorpresa, que por regla general sólo tenían éxito frente a pequeñas fortificaciones.⁵⁶

No obstante, y a pesar de lo llamativo de estas últimas operaciones, lo cierto es que tanto en Tierra Santa como en la Península la suerte final de un asedio —especialmente los que afectaban a grandes núcleos urbanos, cuya anexión resultaba determinante para la conquista de regiones enteras— dependía en muy buena medida del grado de eficacia con que se desarrollase una larga fase previa de destrucciones sistemáticas de su entorno, realizada a base de incursiones de menor envergadura, que a lo largo de meses o de años fueran desgastando los recursos económicos, militares y morales de los enemigos.

Precisamente por eso, un tipo de operaciones que la historiografía tradicional había ignorado o despreciado —las cabalgadas, razias, algazúas...—, cuyo objetivo inmediato muchas veces no era más que el botín, el cautiverio de algunos hombres, el incendio de cosechas y la asolación de pequeñas villas agrarias, se ha convertido en los últimos años en objeto de estudio por derecho propio. Según ha podido demostrarse, en las áreas de frontera ésta era la forma habitual de hacer la guerra y el mecanismo necesario para el planteamiento de futuras anexiones, de modo que dichas operaciones han empezado a ser consideradas como parte integral de la conflictividad armada y de las estrategias de expansión.⁵⁷

tiano (siglos X-XIII)", *Actas del IV Congreso de Arqueología Medieval Española (Alicante, 4-9 de octubre 1993)*. Madrid: Asociación Española de Arqueología Medieval, 1993: II, 399-405; Novoa Portela, Feliciano; Villalba, Francisco Javier. "A propósito de los 'sistemas defensivos' de fortificaciones en la Edad Media peninsular". *Espacio, tiempo y forma. Serie III, Historia medieval*, 16 (2003): 215-228; Novoa Portela, Feliciano; Villalba, Francisco Javier. "Aproximación al estudio de los sistemas defensivos de la Orden de Alcántara", *II Jornadas de Historia Medieval de Extremadura*, Julián Clemente, Juan Luis de la Montaña, coords. Cáceres: Editora Regional de Extremadura, 2005: 165-174; Ruibal, Amador. *Calatrava la Vieja. Estudio de una fortaleza medieval*. Ciudad Real: Instituto de Estudios Manchegos, 1984; Vann, Theresa. "Twelfth-Century Castile and its Frontier Strategies", *The Circle of War in the Middle Ages. Essays on Medieval Military and Naval History*, Donald J. Kagay, L.J. Andrew Villalon, eds. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999: 21-31.

56. En las fronteras de los reinos cristianos del Occidente peninsular es posible constatar la existencia de grupos de guerreros especializados en golpes de mano contra fortalezas y conquistas por sorpresa. A este respecto, sin duda el personaje de esta época mejor conocido es Gerardo Sempavor, un caudillo militar de origen portugués que durante los años centrales del siglo XII, y gracias a estas prácticas, llegó a crear un importante señorío territorial en las tierras situadas entre el Tajo y el Guadiana. Lapiedra, Eva. "Giraldo Sem Pavor, Alfonso Enríquez y los almohades", *Bataliéis. El reino taifa de Badajoz*, Fernando Díaz Esteban, ed. Madrid: Letrúmero, 1996: 147-158; Lapiedra, Eva. "El ardid de la escala nocturna y el engaño a los vigías: posible origen almohade de un pasaje de la toma de Santarém y de la leyenda de Giraldo sem Pavor". *Hesperia, Culturas del Mediterráneo*, 16 (2012): 69-100; Porrinas, David. "La actuación de Giraldo Sempavor a mediados del siglo XII: un estudio comparativo", *II Jornadas de Historia Medieval de Extremadura*, Julián Clemente, Juan Luis de la Montaña, coords. Cáceres: Editora Regional de Extremadura, 2005: 179-188; Pereira, Armando de Sousa. *Geraldo Sem-Pavor. Um Guerreiro de Fronteira entre Cristãos e Muçulmanos*. Oporto: Fronteira do Caos, 2008.

57. Martínez Martínez, María: "La cabalgada: un medio de vida en la frontera murciano-granadina (siglo XIII)". *Miscelánea Medieval Murciana*, 13 (1986): 49-62; García Fitz, Francisco. "Una frontera caliente: la guerra en las fronteras castellano-musulmanas (siglos XI-XIII)", *Identidad y representación de la frontera en la España medieval (siglos XI-XIV)*, Carlos de Ayala, Pascal Buresi, Philippe Josserand, eds. Madrid: Casa de Velázquez-Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2001: 159-179; Torres, Margarita. *El Cid y otros señores de la guerra*. León: Universidad de León, 2000; Alvira, Martín. "Prendiendo el fuego de la guerra. Operaciones militares en las fronteras cristiano-almohades entre 1209 y 1211", *Iglesia, Guerra y Monarquía en la Edad Media: Miscelánea de estudios medievales*, José Peña, Manuel Alejandro Rodríguez, eds. Madrid: CEU Ediciones: 139-192.

4.4 Otras perspectivas de análisis: carreras militares, guerra en el mar y destino de los vencidos

Por otra parte, además del estudio de determinadas operaciones bélicas, las fuentes han permitido la reconstrucción y análisis de las carreras bélicas de algunos monarcas,⁵⁸ así como la trayectoria militar de algún personaje particular, caso de Rodrigo Díaz, el *Cid Campeador*, poniendo de manifiesto no solo los usos y formas habituales en la guerra practicada por un hombre de frontera, sino también la manera en la que toda una sociedad, la fronteriza, abordaba el enfrentamiento armado con el enemigo. El caso es singular, por cuanto que ningún otro personaje histórico castellano-leonés ha tenido la fortuna de contar con fuentes tan variadas -incluyendo una crónica particular y un poema épico- para el estudio de su carrera militar.⁵⁹

Por razones geográficas evidentes, las guerras protagonizadas por los reinos de Castilla y León fueron básicamente terrestres, de manera que, salvo por algún episodio aislado que no ha dejado de llamar la atención -nos referimos a la política marinera de Diego Gelmírez-, hay que esperar hasta mediados del siglo XIII para que se desarrollara una marina de guerra y para que las operaciones navales —recuérdese el asedio de Sevilla de 1248 y, a partir de los años 90 de esta centuria, el desarrollo de la “Guerra del Estrecho”— alcanzaran relevancia dentro del panorama bélico.⁶⁰

58. Véase, por ejemplo: Ruiz, Francisco. “La dimensión bélico-territorial del reinado de Alfonso VIII de Castilla (1158-1214)”, 1212, un año, un reinado, un tiempo de despegue. *XXIII Semana de Estudios Medievales* (Nájera, 30 de julio al 3 de agosto de 2012), Esther López Ojeda, coord. Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2013: 139-169; Ayala, Carlos. “Fernando III: figura, significado y contexto en tiempo de cruzada”, *Fernando III, tiempo de cruzada*, Carlos de Ayala, Martín Ríos, eds. Madrid-México: Sílex-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2012: 17-91.

59. Corral, José Luis. “Método arqueológico y cantares de gesta”, *Simposio Internacional: El Cid en el Valle del Jalón (Ateca-Calatayud, 7-10 de octubre de 1989)*. Calatayud: Institución Fernando el Católico, 1991: 31-46; Corral, José Luis. “Realidad y ficción en el Poema del Cid: historia, literatura y arqueología”, *El Cid Histórico y el Cid en la Leyenda*, Salustiano Moreta, ed. El Burgo de Osma: Ayuntamiento de El Burgo de Osma, 2000: 93-126; García Fitz, Francisco. “El Cid y la guerra”, *Actas del Congreso Internacional sobre El Cid. Poema e Historia*. Burgos: Ayuntamiento de Burgos, 2000: 383-418; García Fitz, Francisco. “War in ‘The Lay of the Cid’”. *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 10 (2012): 61-87; Montaner, Alberto. “La toma de Alcocer en su tratamiento literario: un episodio del Cantar de Mio Cid”, *Simposio Internacional: El Cid en el Valle del Jalón (Ateca-Calatayud, 7-10 de octubre de 1989)*. Calatayud: Institución Fernando el Católico, 1991: 129-160; Montaner, Alberto. “La batalla de Tévar”, *Actas del Congreso Internacional sobre El Cid. Poema e Historia*. Burgos: Ayuntamiento de Burgos, 2000: 353-382; Montaner, Alberto; Boix, Alfonso. *Guerra en Šarq Al’andalus: Las batallas cidianas de Morella (1084) y Cuarte (1094)*. Zaragoza: Instituto de estudios islámicos de Oriente Próximo, 2005; Moreta, Salustiano. “Y el héroe tascó la hierba”, *La Guerra en la Historia. Décimas Jornadas de Estudios Históricos*. Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 1999: 28-43; Oliver, Dolores. “Las batallas del Cantar de Mio Cid desde la perspectiva de la historiografía árabe”. *Revista de Historia Militar*, 73 (1992): 15-52; Oliver, Dolores. “Una nueva interpretación de la batalla de Alcocer”. *Revista de Historia Militar*, 74 (1993): 15-44; Peña, F. Javier. *El Cid. Historia, leyenda y mito*. Burgos: Dosssoles, 2000; Porrinas, David. “Una interpretación del significado de Campeador: el Señor del Campo de Batalla”. *Norba. Revista de historia*, 16/1 (1996-2003): 257-276; Porrinas, David. “La percepción de la guerra del Poema de Mio Cid: entre la realidad y la distorsión”. *Revista de Historia Militar*, 94 (2003): 163-204; Torres, Margarita. *El Cid y otros señores de la guerra...*

60. Al margen de los estudios clásicos sobre esta materia, en los últimos años destacan, además de la tesis doctoral de García de Castro (García de Castro, Francisco Javier. *La marina de guerra de la Corona de Castilla en la Baja Edad Media. Desde sus orígenes hasta el reinado de Enrique IV*. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid (Tesis doctoral), 2011; publicada por la Universidad de Valladolid en 2014; García de Castro, Francisco Javier. *La marina de guerra de la Corona de Castilla en la Edad Media (1248-1474)*. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 2014), los siguientes: Aznar, Eduardo. “La guerra naval en Castilla durante la Baja Edad Media”. *En la España Medieval*, 32 (2009): 167-192; Calderón, José Manuel. *El almirantazgo de Castilla: historia de una institución conflictiva (1250-1560)*. Madrid: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 2003; Flores, Manuel. “La interrelación de las fronteras terrestres y marítima en el período de la Reconquista”, *II Estudios de Frontera. Actividad y vida en la Frontera (Alcalá la Real, 19-22 de noviembre de 1997)*. Jaén: Diputación Provincial, 1998: 253-268; Flores, Manuel. “Una nueva orientación en la historiografía naval. El ejemplo castellano medieval y el asalto contra Salé de 1260”, *La Península Ibérica entre el Mediterráneo y el Atlántico. Siglos XIII-XV*, Manuel González Jiménez, Isabel Montes, eds. Sevilla-Cádiz: Diputación de Cádiz-Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2006: 819-831; Rodríguez García, José Manuel. “La marina alfonsí al asalto de África, 1240-1280. Consideraciones estratégicas e historia”. *Revista de Historia*



No quisiéramos acabar este repaso sobre los estudios en torno a las prácticas militares sin hacer mención a un aspecto directamente derivado de ellas que en los últimos años ha recibido la atención de los especialistas: nos referimos al trato dado a los enemigos una vez que habían sido vencidos. De la capitulación o el acuerdo a la masacre indiscriminada, pasando por el cautiverio y el exilio, el análisis de estas consecuencias de los conflictos armados nos colocan ante unos usos que a veces han sido considerados como “leyes de la guerra” y que en ocasiones representan la ejecución pragmática de los valores, de los prejuicios, del fanatismo o del cálculo político o económico de los combatientes.⁶¹

4.5 Visiones de conjunto y estudios comparados

El progresivo avance de los trabajos sobre la guerra medieval y, en particular, sobre los modos de llevar a la práctica la confrontación armada con el enemigo, permitió que, a mediados de los años 90 del siglo XX, se elaborase ya una obra de conjunto que ofrece un análisis integral de la manera en que, desde unas perspectivas tácticas y estratégicas, se desarrolló la expansión territorial del reino de Castilla-León durante los siglos centrales del Medioevo, englobando el estudio tanto de los cercos y las batallas, como el de las incursiones y la guerra de desgaste.⁶²

No obstante, a finales de la década de los noventa del siglo XX y en la primera del XXI se hacía notar la necesidad de ofrecer una visión global de estas materias que abarcarase, cronológicamente, no solo la totalidad de la historia medieval castellano-leonesa, sino también, geopolíticamente, a todos los reinos cristianos peninsulares. Ello suponía tomar al ámbito hispánico como un escenario único para el estudio de las formas de hacer la guerra, el de la frontera occidental de la Cristiandad frente al Islam, debidamente ampliado para abordar también el precedente de la etapa visigoda. En cierta medida, se trataba de retomar la senda que había marcado a finales de los años 70 Derek Lomax,⁶³ pero aplicando ahora los renovados planteamientos que veinte años más tarde imperaban en la historiografía sobre la guerra medieval.

Precisamente en esta línea fueron dos interesantes aportaciones realizadas desde el medievalismo italiano por Alessandro Vanoli,⁶⁴ si bien ha sido Joseph O’Callaghan, con la publicación entre 2003 y 2014 de una monumental trilogía que tiene como hilo conductor el análisis del conflicto entre cristianos y musulmanes en la España medieval, quien ha contribuido de manera decisiva a

Naval, 85 (2004): 27-55. Véase también el estado de la cuestión publicado por: Flores, Manuel. “Historia militar y naval española medieval. Un acercamiento al estado de la cuestión”. *e-Humanista*, 10 (2008): 244-273.

61. Fierro, Maribel; García Fitz, Francisco, eds. *El cuerpo derrotado: cómo trataban musulmanes y cristianos a los enemigos vencidos* (Península Ibérica, ss. VIII-XIII). Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2008; Rodríguez de la Peña, Alejandro. “Añadiendo muertos a los muertos: el destino de los vencidos en la frontera de Al-Andalus en la cronística latina plenomedieval”, *Hacedores de Frontera. Estudios sobre el contexto social de la Frontera en la España medieval*, Alejandro Manuel Rodríguez de la Peña, dir. Madrid: CEU ediciones, 2009: 27-58; Echevarría, Ana. “La política respecto al musulmán sometido y las limitaciones prácticas de la cruzada en tiempos de Fernando III (1199-1252)”, *Fernando III, tiempo de cruzada*, Carlos de Ayala, Martín Ríos, eds. Madrid-México: Sílex-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2012: 383-413. En particular sobre el cautiverio, la bibliografía es muy extensa, pero conviene al menos recordar la reciente visión de conjunto aportada por: Calderón, José Manuel; Díaz González, Francisco Javier. *Vae Victis: Cautivos y prisioneros en la Edad Media Hispánica*. Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 2012.

62. García Fitz, Francisco. *Castilla y León frente al Islam...*

63. Lomax, Derek. *La Reconquista...* (la versión original en inglés fue publicada en 1978).

64. Vanoli, Alessandro. *Alle origini della Reconquista. Pratiche e immagini della guerra tra Cristianità e Islam*. Turín: Nino Aragone Editore, 2003; Vanoli, Alessandro. *La reconquista*. Bolonia: Il Molino, 2009.

esta tarea.⁶⁵ A ello vino a sumarse, en 2010, la publicación, bajo los auspicios de la Real Academia de la Historia y de la Comisión Española de Historia Militar, del segundo volumen de la *Historia Militar de España*, dedicado a la Edad Media, cuya coordinación estuvo a cargo de Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada.⁶⁶ Además, el proceso general de la guerra contra el Islam en la Península y la consecuente expansión territorial de los reinos cristianos, cuenta también con una interesante aportación cartográfica.⁶⁷

A partir de lo que ya conocemos, ha sido incluso posible realizar un primer estudio comparativo de la realidad militar de las dos fronteras de la Cristiandad occidental frente al Islam —en la Península Ibérica y en Tierra Santa—, poniendo de manifiesto los patrones comunes y las evidentes diferencias que presenta la guerra de conquista a un lado y otro del Mediterráneo,⁶⁸ al tiempo que, de forma más específica, los modelos tácticos de las órdenes militares empleados en estos dos escenarios han sido igualmente analizados desde una perspectiva comparada.⁶⁹

4.6 La política como continuación de la guerra

De todas formas, una de las enseñanzas que se ha podido obtener, y por tanto analizar con detalle en el ámbito de nuestro estudio, es que la confrontación inamistosa entre reinos o sociedades no era sólo una cuestión bélica. En alguna ocasión, parafraseando la conocida sentencia de Clausewitz en la que afirma que la guerra es la continuación de la relación política, pero por otros medios, hemos indicado que, en determinados contextos, y desde luego en el marco medieval peninsular, las relaciones políticas son una continuación de la guerra, pero por otros medios. La política se convierte, de esta forma, en una forma singular de confrontación, a veces alternativa, otras veces complementaria del combate físico.

Por supuesto, la imposición forzosa de la voluntad de una parte sobre la voluntad de otra suele plantearse como un reto militar, pero en no pocas ocasiones las relaciones políticas fueron utilizadas como un recurso más para debilitar o desestabilizar al enemigo, de tal forma que si su sometimiento no era una consecuencia directa del juego de aquellas relaciones políticas o diplomáticas, al menos éstas contribuirían de manera decisiva a la derrota o conquista final.

Consecuentemente, la vía política no deja de ser sino otro tipo de herramienta estratégica en la medida en que se proyecta con el fin de erosionar al enemigo, profundizando sus divisiones internas, pactando con los grupos disidentes surgidos en el bloque contrario, explotando sus flaquezas y empobreciendo permanentemente al adversario a través de la imposición de acuerdos que implican onerosas exigencias tributarias, justificadas éstas como la compensación necesaria para

65. O'Callaghan, Joseph F. *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003; O'Callaghan, Joseph F. *The Gibraltar Crusade. Castile and the Battle for the Strait*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011; O'Callaghan, Joseph F. *The Las Crusade in the West. Castile and the Conquest of Granada*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

66. O'Donnell, Hugo, dir. *Historia Militar de España. II: Edad Media*, Miguel Ángel Ladero, coord. Madrid: Ediciones Laberinto-Ministerio de Defensa, 2010.

67. Sabaté, Flocel. *Atlas de la "Reconquista": la frontera peninsular entre los siglos VIII y XV*. Barcelona: Península, 1998.

68. García Fitz, Francisco. "Las prácticas guerreras en el mediterráneo latino (siglos XI al XIII)", *Regards croisés sur la guerre sainte. Guerre, idéologie et religion dans l'espace méditerranéen latin (XI^e au XIII^e siècle)*, Daniel Baloup, Philippe Josserand, ed. Toulouse: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique-Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, 2006: 323-358.

69. Monteiro, João Gouveia. *Entre Romanos, Cruzados e Ordens Militares. Ensaio de História Militar Antiga e Medieval*. Coimbra: Salamandra, 2010: 255-301 (Capítulo: "As Ordens Militares e os modelos tácticos de combate de um e de outro lado do Mediterrâneo - uma abordagem comparada").



terminar las hostilidades, para no iniciarlas, o como la contrapartida de una supuesta protección frente a terceros.

A medio o largo plazo, el intercambio político, planteado como instrumento estratégico, acaba generando tensiones entre gobernantes y gobernados, fragmentando la cohesión social del opositor, desgastando sus posibilidades de resistencia y, en fin, facilitando la ejecución de los programas de anexión territorial. Por supuesto, estas operaciones políticas o diplomáticas aparecen habitualmente combinadas con el empleo de las fuerzas militares, ya esgrimidas como simple amenaza o como factor de coacción, ya utilizadas como elemento de presión directa para la consecución de pactos rentables desde una perspectiva política, territorial o financiera, razón por la cual la frontera entre lo estrictamente político y lo netamente bélico se difumina a veces hasta desaparecer. La experiencia castellano-leonesa así lo demuestra.⁷⁰

5. A modo de conclusión: logros, carencias, limitaciones y riesgos

Después de lo que hemos visto, no puede negarse que en los últimos veinte años se ha avanzado notablemente en el estudio de la conducción de la guerra en los reinos de Castilla y León durante la Plena Edad Media. No obstante, es necesario advertir que este avance presenta todavía algunas carencias que tendrían que solventarse con nuevos estudios. Conocemos con cierto detalle los usos y prácticas bélicas que caracterizan a las confrontaciones entre cristianos y musulmanes, pero este hecho contrasta con la escasa o nula atención que han merecido las desarrolladas a partir de los enfrentamientos entre reinos cristianos o en el interior de un mismo reino —querellas dinásticas o enfrentamiento entre nobleza y monarquías, por ejemplo—. Desde una perspectiva bélica, este terreno todavía está pendiente de nuevas aportaciones.⁷¹ También resulta urgente realizar estudios comparativos de mayor alcance y entidad que permitan establecer diferencias y concomitancias con otros ámbitos geohistóricos de la misma época.

A pesar de estas carencias, hay que reconocer que el trayecto que se ha recorrido es reseñable. Hace poco más de veinte años la historia militar medieval en España era un tema propio de militares y seguía circunscrito a la historia-batalla. Hoy día ha entrado de lleno en el medievalismo académico, contamos con una bibliografía internacionalmente conocida y de obligada referencia⁷² —aunque sigue siendo necesario un esfuerzo de internacionalización de lo que ya conocemos

70. García Fitz, Francisco. "Alfonso X, el reino de Granada y los Banu Asquilula. Estrategias políticas de disolución durante la segunda mitad del siglo XIII". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 27/1 (1997): 215-237; García Fitz, Francisco. *Relaciones políticas y guerra. La experiencia castellano-leonesa. Siglos XI al XIII*. Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 2002; García Fitz, Francisco. "Alfonso X y sus relaciones con el emirato granadino: política y guerra". *Alcanate. Revista de Estudios Alfonsíes*, 4 (2004-2005): 35-77; Melo, Diego. "Conflicto y Diplomacia en el nacimiento del Emirato Nazarí de Granada". *Studi Medievali*, 54 (2014): 565-592; Rojas Gabriel, Manuel. "A Decisive Century in the Struggle against Islam in Iberia, ca. 1031-1157: Grand Strategic Perspectives", *The Medieval Way of War: Studies in Medieval Military History in Honor of Bernard S. Bachrach*, Gregory I. Halfond, ed. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015: 185-204.

71. Recientemente, el estudio de la caballería en el ámbito castellano-leonés durante los siglos centrales de la Edad Media ha puesto de manifiesto la importancia de los enfrentamientos entre cristianos en la formulación del ideal caballeresco y se ha llamado la atención sobre la necesidad de abordar este tipo de confrontaciones si se quiere tener una imagen cabal de la guerra y no exclusivamente centrada en la lucha contra los musulmanes. Porrinas, David. *Guerra y caballería en la Plena Edad Media: condicionantes y actitudes bélicas. Castilla y León, siglos XI al XIII*. Cáceres: Universidad de Extremadura (Tesis doctoral), 2015.

72. A título de ejemplo, véase la presencia de la bibliografía hispánica especializada en estas materias en los cuatro estados de la cuestión publicados por Claude Gaier: Gaier, Claude. "De quelques tendances actuelles de l' historiographie militaire médiévale". *Le Moyen Âge*, 104/2 (1998): 291-303; Gaier, Claude. "De l'Empire romain d'Orient à la Renaissance, à travers l'histoire militaire". *Le Moyen Âge*, 108/2 (2002): 345-354; Gaier, Claude. "Dire et faire la guerre

sobre la realidad bélica hispánica—, se han escrito y se están escribiendo tesis doctorales,⁷³ se han desarrollado y se están desarrollando proyectos de investigación,⁷⁴ las Universidades y otros centros de investigación españoles organizan constantemente ciclos de conferencias, cursos de verano, jornadas de estudio, seminarios o congresos sobre estas materias y, desde 2013, una universidad española —la Universidad Complutense de Madrid—, en colaboración con el Ministerio de Defensa, cuenta con una Cátedra de Historia Militar en la que hay una importante presencia de estudios medievales.⁷⁵

Además, dentro de este marco general de interés por la historia militar en el ámbito académico, en los últimos años han aparecido algunas revistas especializadas⁷⁶ y se han creado algunas asociaciones para el estudio histórico de la guerra,⁷⁷ si bien están muy centradas en las épocas modernas y contemporánea, de modo que la presencia de la realidad bélica medieval en estas publicaciones y asociaciones es escasa. Para cubrir este hueco se ha fundado, en junio de 2015, la *Asociación Ibérica de Historia Militar (siglos IV-XV)*, que reúne destacados especialistas portugueses y españoles en estos temas y que aspira “a dinamizar, coordinar y divulgar la investigación científica que se realiza en el mundo hispánico sobre historia militar”⁷⁸ en el período comprendido entre la fase final del mundo romano y el inicio de la expansión ultramarina, para lo cual tiene la intención de promover reuniones científicas, publicaciones conjuntas y otras actividades. Entre estas, destaca la creación

au Moyen Âge”. *Le Moyen Âge*, 112/3 (2006): 643-655; Gaier, Claude. “De re militari... et quibusdam alii”. *Le Moyen Âge*, 115/3 (2009): 607-612.

73. Solo en los últimos quince años se han leído en las universidades españolas más de una docena de Tesis Doctorales —seguramente el número es superior, pero consignamos únicamente aquellas de las que hemos tenido noticia— que han tratado, desde perspectivas y con metodologías muy diversas, el tema de la guerra. Por supuesto, estos trabajos no están centrados únicamente en el reino de Castilla-León, ni en la Plena Edad Media, ni en el análisis de la forma de combatir, sino que abarcan todos los reinos cristianos peninsulares, un amplio período que va desde el siglo XI al XV y sus contenidos y métodos de análisis son, como decimos, muy variados, pero en conjunto vienen a demostrar la robustez de estas líneas de investigación.

74. Por citar únicamente algunos recientes proyectos de investigación de ámbito nacional, financiados por los Ministerios competentes en cada momento, cabría recordar el desarrollado entre 2008 y 2010 bajo el título *La Conducción de la Guerra (c. 950-c. 1350): planteamientos y perspectivas*, coordinado en la Universidad de Extremadura por Manuel Rojas Gabriel (HUM2007-64897); el dirigido en la Universidad Rovira i Virgili por Amancio Isla Frez entre 2010 y 2012 sobre *La guerra en los reinos cristianos peninsulares. Dinámicas sociales e ideológicas* (HAR2009-13225), que tiene continuación actualmente (2014-2016) gracias al proyecto *Memorias de la guerra medieval hispana* (HAR2013-45266-P); y el desarrollado entre 2009 y 2011 desde la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, encabezado por Carlos de Ayala Martínez y titulado *Iglesia y legitimación del poder político. Guerra Santa y Cruzada en la Edad Media del Occidente Peninsular (1050-1250)* (HAR2008-01259/HIST), que también tiene continuación entre 2012 y 2015 bajo el título de *Génesis y desarrollo de la guerra santa cristiana en la Edad Media del occidente peninsular (ss. X-XIV)* (HAR2012-32790).

75. Esta Cátedra ya ha organizado dos reuniones científicas: el *I Congreso Internacional de la Cátedra Complutense de Historia Militar*, celebrado en Madrid entre el 22 y el 24 de octubre de 2013 y el *I Seminario Internacional de la Cátedra Extraordinaria de Historia Militar de la Universidad Complutense. Frontera y fortificación*, celebrado en Madrid entre el 21 y el 23 de octubre de 2014.

76. Además de la continuidad de la revista *Gladius*, editada por el Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, entre 1989 y 2003 la Universidad Complutense publicó *Militaria. Revista de cultura militar*, y desde 2012 hasta la actualidad se viene publicando la *Revista Universitaria de Historia Militar*. Revista Universitaria de Historia Militar (RUHM). “Inicio”. *Revista Universitaria de Historia Militar*. 15 septiembre 2015 <<http://ruhm.es/index.php/RUHM>>.

77. Así la *Asociación Española de Historia Militar*, fundada en 2013, que ha celebrado ya dos congresos: *I Congreso Internacional de Historia Militar “La historia militar hoy: nuevas perspectivas”*, Burgos, 28-30 mayo de 2014 y *II Congreso Internacional de Historia Militar “Novela Histórica e Historia Militar”*, 27 al 29 de mayo de 2015.

78. Associação Ibérica de História Militar, séculos IV-XVI. “La Fundación de la Asociación Ibérica de Historia Militar (SS. IV-XVI)”. *Associação Ibérica de História Militar, séculos IV-XVI*. 15 septiembre 2015 <<http://aih militar.wix.com/site#sobre-2/clj3s>>.



de una revista especializada en línea —*e-Strategica. Journal of the Iberian Association of Military History (4th-16th centuries)*—, cuyo primer número se publicará en 2016.⁷⁹

Como recientemente ha subrayado Emilio Mitre desde su larga experiencia en estas materias, al contemplar la abundancia de propuestas se tiene la impresión de que la guerra medieval se ha convertido en una moda historiográfica, como antes lo había sido el estudio de los conflictos sociales, de las disidencias religiosas o de la muerte, si bien este caso presenta la singularidad de haber sido, apenas tres décadas antes, “una especie de tema maldito” en el medievalismo académico hispano.⁸⁰

Está claro, pues, que el tiempo en el que el estudio de la guerra era poco más que un fenómeno marginal en un contexto marcado precisamente por la guerra, y en el que quienes nos dedicábamos a ello éramos mirados con cierto recelo por parte de muchos colegas, parece haber pasado. El trabajo realizado a lo largo de las tres últimas décadas no sólo ha permitido asentar —normalizar, si se quiere— la vertiente militar de la historia en el ámbito del medievalismo académico, sino que además se ha hecho en conexión con las historiografías anglosajonas y francesas que han venido marcando la pauta de este tipo de estudios. El caso castellano-leonés de la Plena Edad Media es solo un ejemplo de la profunda renovación historiográfica que ha experimentado esta materia en tiempos recientes, pero no creemos estar muy equivocados si afirmamos que la historiografía especializada española, referida a las realidades bélicas del resto de los reinos ibéricos medievales y a otras etapas del medievo, ha experimentado un proceso similar.

Pero no quisiéramos terminar esta presentación dando la impresión de complacencia acrítica: aunque no en todos,⁸¹ este campo de estudio sigue estando ausente en algunos de los estados de la cuestión dedicados a presentar las principales tendencias del medievalismo hispánico,⁸² síntoma de que todavía necesita ampliar su presencia y ganar influencia en el panorama del medievalismo académico, lo que solo se conseguirá desde el rigor y desde la demostración de que la historia de la guerra, la historia de la forma de combatir, no solo es un aspecto no desvinculado —ni por su contenido ni por su metodología— de la investigación histórica, sino también una atalaya desde donde contemplar algunos de los rasgos históricos más determinantes de las sociedades medievales.

Sin embargo, para ello se hace preciso que el estudio de los combates no se convierta en una faceta aislada del análisis de la guerra, sino que sepa enlazar de manera coherente y convincente tanto con otros aspectos de la actividad militar —el liderazgo, la organización militar, la logística, el armamento, las justificaciones...— como, sobre todo, con los grandes ejes de la dinámica histórica, esto es, con el ejercicio del poder, con las posibilidades y los límites de la producción económica, con las formas de ordenación y jerarquización de la sociedad, con el estado de la tecnología o con los desarrollos ideológicos, entre otros. El reto historiográfico es difícil y complejo, si bien creemos que algunas de las obras citadas a lo largo de estas páginas lo han abordado con solvencia. Con

79. Associação Ibérica de História Militar, séculos IV-XVI. “Página principal”. *Associação Ibérica de História Militar, séculos IV-XVI*. 15 septiembre 2015 <<http://aihmmilitar.wix.com/site>>.

80. Mitre, Emilio. “La paz entre cristianos y el síndrome turco a fines del Medievo. De Nicolás de Cusa a Erasmo de Rotterdam”, *Guerra y paz en la Edad Media*, Ana Arranz, Pilar Rábade, Oscar Villarroel, coords. Madrid: Sílex, 2013: 55.

81. Véase, por ejemplo: García Fitz, Francisco. “Historia política y estructura de poder. Castilla y León”, *La Historia Medieval en España. Un balance historiográfico (1968-1998)*. *Actas de la XXV Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella (14 al 18 de julio de 1998)*. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 1999: 201-220; Arias, Fernando. “The Many Histories of Medieval Spain...”: 84-86.

82. Aurell, Jaime. “Tendencias recientes del medievalismo español”. *Memoria y Civilización*, 11 (2008): 63-103; Menjot, Denis. “L’historiographie du moyen âge espagnol: de l’histoire de la différence à l’histoire des différences. Étude et bibliographie”. Diciembre 2009, *e-Spania*, 8. 15 septiembre 2015 <<https://e-spania.revues.org/19028?lang=es#text>>.

todo, convendría no olvidar nunca que el objetivo último de cada investigación académica sobre estas materias debería aspirar a contribuir, desde la perspectiva de la guerra, al conocimiento histórico general, y evitar, a toda costa, el riesgo del aislamiento, de la marginalidad o incluso del “frikismo”.



LA NOVELA GÓTICA *CURIAL E GÜELFA*: UNA CREACIÓN ERUDITA DE MILÀ I FONTANALS

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RESUMEN

Curial e Güelfa no es una novela de caballerías de la primera mitad del siglo XV, sino una novela “gótica”, escrita en el siglo XIX por su descubridor, Manuel Milà i Fontanals. El texto dibuja nítidamente el perfil de su autor: un erudito que ha leído desde la *Crònica* de Muntaner al *Novellino*, *Paris e Viana* y *Petit Jehan de Saintré*, que conoce a los trovadores Rigaut de Berbezilh y Raimbaut de Vaqueiras; que ha leído las *Mitologiae* de Fulgencio, las *Glosas de la Eneida* de Enrique de Villena, la *Visión deleitable* de Alfonso de la Torre, las *Coplas* de Manrique y *El cortesano* de Luis Milán, entre otras muchas obras. Son las concordancias con dichas creaciones las que evidencian la imitación compuesta que lleva a cabo el cultísimo escritor catalán y al mismo tiempo son las pruebas de que *Curial e Güelfa* no puede ser de ninguna manera una obra escrita en el siglo XV; ningún escritor podía tener a su alcance todas las obras indicadas y, por supuesto, sería imposible que pudiera haber leído las posteriores a la fecha que se da para su creación.

INTRODUCCIÓN

La falsificación erudita de textos tiene una larga historia y muy ilustres protagonistas: Erasmo, por ejemplo. Anthony Grafton, autor del ya clásico *Forgers and Critics*, lo cuenta así:

In 1530, Erasmus published his fourth edition of the works of Saint Cyprian. This included as a stop-press supplement a treatise, De duplici martyrio (On the Two Forms of Martyrdom), which, as its table of contents said, was “discovered in an ancient library; may it be possible to search out other valuable works of his as well” [...]. De duplici martyrio is not Erasmus’ discovery but his composition; it marks an effort to find the support of the early Church for his theology at the cost —which he elsewhere insisted must never be paid —of falsifying the records of that Church. The greatest patristic scholar of the sixteenth century forged a major patristic work.¹

Solo un humanista como él pudo hacerlo, solo el más grande estudioso de la patrística de su tiempo pudo crear una falsificación convincente; lo único que lo delata es el apoyo ideológico que le da el texto, su texto; pero es evidente que por eso lo creó. Grafton afirma además que *in the*

1. “En 1530, Erasmus publicó su cuarta edición de las obras de San Cipriano. Esto incluyó como suplemento un tratado, *De duplici martyrio* (En las dos formas de martirio), que, como su tabla de contenido, dijo, fue ‘descubierta en una antigua biblioteca; de esta manera también podría ser posible buscar otras valiosas obras de él’ [...]. *De duplici martyrio* no es el descubrimiento de Erasmus pero sí su composición; marca un esfuerzo por encontrar el apoyo de la temprana Iglesia por su teología en el costo —el cual ha insistido en todo momento que nunca debe ser pagado— de la falsificación de los registros de esta Iglesia. El mayor erudito patrístico del siglo XVI forjó una obra patrística aún más importante”. Grafton, Anthony. *Forgers and Critics. Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship*. Londres: Collins & Brown, 1990: 44-45.



seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries all these practices continued, y añade una nueva variedad a la falsificación: ya no se “crearán” solo textos clásicos, sino en lenguas romances:

In the eighteenth, Thomas Chatterton and James Macpherson used the traditional means —imposition of supposedly archaic script and spelling on the one hand, the claim to have translated from inaccessible originals in an unknown language on the other—to reimagine the medieval and the premedieval history of the Gothic North itself [...]. And even sophisticated reading publics, like the early readers of Horace Walpole's Castle of Otranto, a Gothic thriller supposedly reprinted from a black-letter original text in the library of an English recusant family, were fooled, perhaps not without complicity, by the convention. No form of serious forgery has ever entirely died. The artistic creation of supposedly historical documents has continued into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.²

En este marco debe situarse la creación de una novela catalana que en todas las historias de la literatura se dice fue escrita en el siglo XV, pero que en realidad es creación literaria de su descubridor: el extraordinario erudito Manuel Milà i Fontanals. Y de él digo lo mismo que de Erasmo y su *De duplici martyrio*: solo un extraordinario conocedor de la literatura románica como él pudo escribir una novela como *Curial e Güelfa* porque su estofa tiene hilos de textos catalanes, castellanos, provenzales, franceses e italianos.

2. La aparición de *Curial e Güelfa*

Curial e Güelfa es una extraña mezcla de libro de caballerías y de novela sentimental, con pasajes mitológicos y alegóricos; su descubridor, Manuel Milà i Fontanals, vio en ella un *singulier mélange de gothique et de renaissance* (“mezcla singular de gótico y renacentista”). El único manuscrito en donde está copiada aparece en el siglo XIX, supuestamente tras siglos de total olvido y desconocimiento, porque no hay mención de ella en texto alguno hasta que en 1876 el erudito da noticia de su existencia en un artículo en francés: *Notes sur trois manuscrits*, en *Revue de Langues Romanes*.³ En el apartado II, *Un roman catalan*, cuenta una historia en sí novelesca: cómo el director de la Biblioteca Nacional, Agustín Durán —que había muerto bastante antes de que se publicara esta nota, en 1862— conoció esta novela *dans ces dernières années* (“en sus últimos años”) e hizo su descripción, que él a continuación traduce al francés:

Ce livre, ou chronique chevaleresque, sans titre, parle des prouesses de Curial et de ces [sic] amours avec la noble dame Güelfa. C'est un précieux Codex, à ce qu'il paraît inédit, écrit en langue catalane. À en juger par [sic] ses lettres, sa dimension, ses marques, sa qualité de papier et même par sa reliure, il paraît avoir été écrit ou copié pendant la première moitié du XVe siècle. Il est divisé en trois livres.⁴

2. “en los siglos XVII, XIX, XVIII, y todas estas prácticas continuaron”; “En el siglo XVIII, Thomas Chatterton y James Macpherson utilizaron los medios tradicionales —mediante la implementación de la escritura y la ortografía arcaica por un lado y, la afirmación de haber traducido a partir de originales de difícil acceso en un idioma desconocido, por el otro— para re-imaginar la historia medieval y premedieval del propio Norte gótico [...]. E incluso sofisticados públicos lectores, como los primeros lectores del Castillo de Otranto de Horace Walpole, un thriller gótico supuestamente reimpresso a partir de un texto original en letra gótica procedente de la biblioteca de una familia inglesa acusada por su oposición a la Iglesia oficial de Inglaterra, y fueron falsificados, quizás con la complicidad, dentro del marco de las convenciones sociales. Ninguna forma de falsificación grave ha muerto nunca por completo. La creación artística de los documentos supuestamente históricos ha continuado en los siglos XIX y XX”. Grafton, Anthony. *Forgers and Critics...*: 32, 34.

3. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. “Notes sur trois manuscrits”. *Revue de Langues Romanes*, 10 (1876): 233-238.

4. “Este libro, o crónica caballeresca, sin título, habla de la destreza de Curial y de éstos [sic] romances con la noble dama Güelfa. Es un precioso códice, parece nuevo, escrito en catalán. A juzgar por [sic] sus cartas, su tamaño, sus marcas, su papel de calidad e incluso por su unión, parece haber sido escrito o copiado durante la primera mitad del siglo XV.



Como ya he dicho en otro lugar, no deja de ser sorprendente que un extraordinario erudito como Milà admita que se diga *c'est un précieux 'Codex', à ce qu'il paraît inédit*⁵ y resulta inverosímil su cautela. Pero sigo copiando lo que él afirma del texto:

Le langage du roman nous ferait croire à une époque un peu plus moderne; mais nous l'avons trop peu étudié pour en déduire s'il fut antérieur ou postérieur au Tirant lo Blanch, le seul roman chevaleresque de longue haleine qu'on connaisse dans la littérature catalane [...] Le langage de notre roman est élégant et correct, et son orthographe assez régulière. Nous remarquons quelques prêt[ér]ites en ba pour ua–va.⁶

Parece, por tanto, que su lenguaje nos lleva a una época más moderna; lo califica como elegante y correcto; y a su ortografía, como *assez régulière* (“bastante regular”); luego añade ese detalle tan extraño: que algunos pretéritos acaben en *–ba* (como si siguieran la grafía actual del castellano) en vez de en *–va* (como la moderna del catalán). ¿Acaso se puede destacar tal rasgo en un códice en tiempos en que no hay regularización gráfica? Si lo señalo no es para dudar de la extremada competencia del gran erudito, sino para indicar que con todo ello él nos está dejando entrever algo.

El códice, según Durán, parece haber sido copiado en la primera mitad del XV, pero el cultísimo Milà i Fontanals indica que no se puede saber si la obra es anterior o posterior al *Tirant* (que el propio Joanot Martorell dice que empezó a escribir el 2 de enero de 1460); y aunque afirma que apenas sabe nada de ella, resume enseguida su contenido y reproduce fragmentos. Este admirable erudito, uno de los padres de la *Renaixença*, se topa con una joya como el *Curial e Güelfa*, que enriquece tanto la literatura medieval catalana, ¡y no la edita para darla a conocer!⁷ La novela no verá la luz hasta 1901, cuando Antonio Rubió i Lluch la edita por vez primera. Hace más de veinte años, en 1991, Jaume Riera i Sans dio una explicación a esta situación anómala: el *Curial e Güelfa* era una falsificación, y su autor era su supuesto descubridor: Manuel Milà i Fontanals.⁸ Todos los estudiosos rechazaron su lectura.⁹

Se divide en tres libros”. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *Estudios sobre Historia, Lengua y Literatura de Cataluña. Obras completas*, ed. Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo. Barcelona: Librería de Álvaro Verdaguer, 1890: III, 486.

5. “Es un códice preciado, por lo que parece, inédito”. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. “Notes sur trois...”: 233.

6. “El lenguaje de la novela nos quiere hacer creer en una época un poco mas moderna; pero nosotros no la hemos estudiado suficientemente para deducir si fue anterior o posterior al Tirant lo Blanch, la única novela caballeresca extensa que se conoce en la literatura Catalán [...] El lenguaje de nuestro novela es elegante y adecuado y su ortografía bastante regular. Nos damos cuenta de algunos pretéritos en ‘ba’ en vez de ‘ua’-‘va’”. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *Estudios sobre Historia, Lengua y Literatura de Cataluña...* III, 486.

7. Precisamente escribe a Menéndez Pelayo una carta en ese tiempo, el 3 de octubre de 1876, y le dice: “En mi reciente ida a Madrid vi en la Biblioteca Nacional una traducción de la *Disciplina clericalis* de Pedro Alfonso, que se ha dado como traducción catalana y que yo creo que es gascona y acaso bearnesa. Ya le cursaré a V. una notita que imprimo en la *Revue des Langues Romanes*, acerca de este y otros dos manuscritos”. ¡Ni le menciona el *Curial*, que es uno de los “otros dos manuscritos”! Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *Epistolari, correspondència recollida i anotada per L. Nicolau d’Oliver*. Barcelona: Institut d’Estudis Catalans, 1932: II (1875-1880), 100.

8. Riera i Sans, Jaume. “Falsos dels segles XIII, XIV i XV”. *Actes del novè col·loqui internacional de Llengua i Literatura catalanes (Alacant/ Elx, 9-14 de setembre de 1991)*. Barcelona: Publicacions de l’Abadia de Montserrat, 1993: 479-489.

9. La opinión de Riera i Sans fue refutada de forma inmediata prácticamente todos los expertos en diferentes vertientes de la materia. La refutación se ha pretendido basar en el formato literario, el lenguaje y vocabulario utilizado y aspectos formales como la grafía y la encuadernación. En esta línea, son de destacar, entre otros, los trabajos siguientes: Perarnau, Josep. “El manuscrit medieval del ‘Curial e Güelfa’”. *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics*, 11 (1992): 363-373; Hernández, Carmen; Ruiz de Elvira, Isabel. “Estudio sobre la encuadernación del ms/9750 de la biblioteca Nacional de Madrid: ‘Curial e Güelfa’”. *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics*, 11 (1992): 373-377; Colon, Germà. “Una altra vegada ‘atovar’ en el ‘Curial e Güelfa’”. *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics*, 11 (1992): 378-384; Gimeno, Francisco M. “Notes d’un paleògraf a propòsit del matritensis 9750 de la Biblioteca Nacional (Curial e Güelfa)”. *Caplletra*, 15 (1993): 75-87. El presente estudio no pre-

El investigador señalaba extrañezas del códice, por ejemplo, que tiene los reclamos de los dos primeros pliegos en castellano (*Quaderno primero, Segundo*), escritos además por la misma mano que el texto. Citaba la advertencia de Ramon Aramon i Serra¹⁰ sobre la puntuación lógica del texto que facilita en gran manera su lectura, y rectificaba diciendo que no era lógica sino moderna: *Més que puntuació lògica, es tracta d'una puntuació moderna, no per altra raó sinó perquè el copista hi passava en net un text que ja tenia els punts i comes posats a la manera actual*.¹¹

Pero hay algo más en el códice que está indicando su carácter “gótico moderno”: la presencia del lápiz. La caja del manuscrito está dibujada a lápiz, al menos puede apreciarse perfectamente desde el 52 v. hasta el 125, en que desaparece; y en algunos folios es clarísima (por ejemplo, en 68, 73, 74, 81, 85 vto., 102, etc.). Y además, junto a la numeración regular a lápiz del texto hecha por un bibliotecario, hay otra esporádica, pero correcta, también a lápiz, que no coincide con aquella porque empieza dos folios antes (cuenta los dos en blanco que preceden al comienzo del texto); así podemos ver los siguientes números a lápiz: 36, 50, 81, 100, 111, 137, 171, 172, 173, 185, 191, 197, 200 y 228. El último está puesto en el segundo folio en blanco que sigue al final del texto y cierra el códice. Como es lógico, esa esporádica numeración, ordenada (siempre indica dos folios más que la numeración “oficial”), se hizo antes de que el códice fuera numerado por un profesional. ¿Qué sentido podía tener numerar solo esas páginas?, ¿quién podría haberlo hecho? Esas preguntas son esenciales por el material utilizado: el lápiz, invento que solo empezó a usarse a fines del XVIII y lo fue de forma general en el XIX. Solo cobra sentido ese recuento si le sirve al que lo hace; y no lo haría a un supuesto lector, pero sí a la persona que está copiando el texto y que va contando cuánto trabajo tiene hecho.

A propósito del códice, en su edición del *Curial*, resumen Badia y Torró:

*Perarnau i Gimeno daten respectivament la lletra entre 1430-1440 i 1412-1465, tot posant-la en relació amb la d'altres còdexs i documents coetanis de mà catalana, propers a les oficines del mestre racional, mentre que Hernández & Ruiz estimen que el rellogat del volum és de darreries del XV o principis del XVI.*¹²

La encuadernación es, sin duda alguna, antigua. Al ser restaurada, se descubrió que escondía unos fragmentos de texto, que parecen papeles de alguna escribanía y están escritos en castellano (y no en catalán); pero es lógico que, si se quiere jugar al manuscrito medieval, se le dé la forma externa adecuada. El papel es de época, pero los folios presentan más de diez marcas de agua distintas, como si se hubiera reunido papel antiguo para la escritura del texto. Confío en que se empleen los métodos modernos de análisis químico de tinta y papel para que el análisis material del códice confirme lo que el contenido de la obra copiada en él dice.

tende polemizar con estas aportaciones sino presentar argumentaciones formales y literarias hasta ahora inéditas que tampoco pueden ser ignoradas.

10. *Curial e Güelfa*, ed. Ramon Aramon i Sierra. Barcelona: Barcino, 1930, 3 vols. Cito el texto por esta edición e indico solo tras la cita el volumen y la página.

11. “Más que puntuación lógica, se trata de una puntuación moderna, no por otra razón sino porque el copista pasaba en limpio un texto que ya tenía los puntos y comas puestos a la manera actual”. Riera i Sans, Jaume. “Falsos dels segles XIII, XIV i XV...”: 480.

12. “Perarnau Gimeno datan la letra entre 1430-1440 y 1412-1465 respectivamente, poniéndola en relación con la de otros códices y documentos coetáneos de mano catalana, cercanos a las oficinas del maestro racional, mientras que Hernández y Ruiz estiman que la encuadernación del volumen es de finales del XV o principios del XVI”. Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. “Introducció”, *Curial e Güelfa*. Barcelona: Quaderns Crema, 2011: 11.



No me cabe duda alguna, por tanto, de que Riera i Sans tiene razón: *Curial e Güelfa* es una novela histórica del XIX y no una novela de caballerías del XV.

3. Aportaciones críticas sobre el autor del *Curial*

A Ramon i Serra, en la noticia preliminar a su edición de 1939, fecha la obra *vers la meitat del segle XV*, y se apoya en que *Rubió i Lluch i Alfons Par han arribat, per camins distints, a concretar-la entre els anys 1443 i 1460*. Subraya ya la gran erudición del autor:

Dant hi és recordat tothora amb veneració i les seves citacions són ben abundoses; elles fan de Curial e Güelfa l'obra més dantesca de la nostra literatura. Boccaccio [...] és també una font important del Curial. El Novellino proporciona a l'autor la base de l'acció principal, almenys per al segon i tercer llibres. No és possible d'oblidar, altrament, els herois del cicle bretó i altres personatges vivents en la literatura francesa; ni els autors clàssics i totes les al·lusions mitològiques; ni l'episodi del cor menjat, evocador de la vida llegendària del trobador Guillem de Cabestany, i la cançó de Richart de Barbezilh, que indiquen uns contactes amb la literatura provençal; ni les contínues referències a Guido delle Colonne.¹³

Y no puede dejar de subrayar que *l'erudició, usada com a motiu de lluïment, l'abús de cites mitològiques, són els excessos dels que es lliuraven —amb una exageració evident— als corrents nous*;¹⁴ es decir al Renacimiento. Nos encontramos, pues, ante una obra escrita a mitad del XV, pero cuyo autor hace uso de la imitación compuesta —de varias literaturas— al modo de la abeja renacentista, y lo lleva a cabo antes de que la imprenta pudiera poner a su alcance las numerosas obras de varias literaturas que aparecen imitadas o citadas en ella.

Martí de Riquer fecha la obra entre 1435 y 1462, y al hablar del perfil del autor del *Curial*, destaca algunas sorprendentes modernidades de la obra:

No sabem res de l'autor del Curial (potser un urgellista nostàlgic), excepte que era un hàbil escriptor i un elegant prosista [...] i fins s'atreveix amb audàcies, com aquella mena de cas de telepatia que s'esdevé quan Curial, després de vèncer els acusadors de la duquesa, veu un retaule de Sant Marc i es recorda de la Güelfa, i a aquesta, en el mateix moment, però a Monferrato, se li apareix Sant Marc i li anuncia la victòria del cavaller a tan llunyanes terres. El Curial és dividit en tres llibres, i o bé es tracta d'una imperdonable distracció o bé d'una audàcia digna d'Unamuno o de Pirandello que, al tercer llibre, Melchior del Pando digui a Curial, parlant-li en estil directe: "E faç conclusió que millor partit te'n portes que no deixes a la Güelfa, segons en l'altre llibre et diguí".¹⁵

13. "hacia la mitad del siglo XV"; "Rubió i Lluch y Alfonso Par han llegado, por caminos distintos, a concretarla entre los años 1443 y 1460"; "Dante es recordado en todo momento con veneración y sus citas son abundantes; ellas hacen de Curial e Güelfa la obra más dantesca de nuestra literatura. Boccaccio [...] es también una fuente importante del Curial. El Novellino proporciona al autor la base de la acción principal, al menos para el segundo y tercer libros. No es posible olvidar, por otra parte, los héroes del ciclo bretón y otros personajes vivientes en la literatura francesa; ni los autores clásicos y todas las alusiones mitológicas; ni el episodio del corazón comido, el cual evoca la vida legendaria del trovador Guillem de Cabestany, y la canción de Richart de Barbezilh, que indican unos contactos con la literatura provenzal; ni las continuas referencias a Guido delle Colonne". Aramon i Serra, Ramon. "Notícia preliminar", *Curial e Güelfa*. Barcelona: Barcino, 1930: I, 7, 11-12.

14. "la erudición, usada como motivo de lucimiento, el abuso de citas mitológicas, son los excesos de los que se entregaban —con una exageración evidentemente a las corrientes nuevos". Aramon i Serra, Ramon. "Notícia preliminar...": I, 13.

15. "No sabemos nada del autor del Curial (quizás un urgellista nostálgico), excepto que era un hábil escritor y un elegante prosista [...] y hasta se atreve con audacias, como aquel tipo de caso de telepatía que ocurre cuando Curial, tras vencer los acusadores de la duquesa, ve un retablo de San Marcos y se acuerda de la Güelfa, y ésta, en el mismo momento, pero a Monferrato, se le aparece San Marcos y le anuncia la victoria del caballero a tan lejanas tierras. El Curial

Al gran erudito le sorprende la audacia de la telepatía entre los protagonistas, y la conciencia —y el recuerdo— del narrador de la estructura que ha dado a la obra con la también “moderna” referencia a lo dicho en el libro anterior.

No puedo más que añadir a estas “modernidades” otra: una frase que le dice la Güelfa a la Abadesa a propósito del “destierro” que impone a Curial: *Lo món és gran e ample*.¹⁶ Que “el mundo es grande y ancho” lo oímos en la tragedia de Shakespeare *Romeo y Julieta* en boca de fray Lorenzo diciéndoselo a Romeo como consuelo a su destierro: *Hence from Verona art thou banished. / Be patient, for the world is broad and wide*; es la escena III del acto tercero.¹⁷

En la extensa introducción que hacen de la obra Badia y Torró en su edición, los estudiosos destacan su construcción meticulosa:

El Curial és una obra planificada amb cura, que té ben poc a veure amb una novel·la que es va engreixant a cop d'inventiva, penjant episodis d'un fil, com passa sovint al Tirant lo Blanc. Van ser calculades la mesura de les dimensions, la divisió en llibres, la reiteració de motius simbòlics i la cronologia interna. Cada una de les parts del Curial va encapçalada per un pròleg que indica l'abast temàtic i moral de la ficció.¹⁸

Los estudiosos, al exponer sus criterios de edición, dicen de la prosa del relato: *El Curial és escrit en una prosa treballada, clara i elegant, comprensible des del català literari actual*. Y con respecto a la fechación precisan:

La segona meitat de la dècada dels anys quaranta del segle XV, quan Alfons IV el Magnànim s'acabava d'instal·lar al tron de Nàpols (1442), podria escaure a la redacció del Curial, d'acord també amb el tracte benivolent que reben les grans cases nobles de França i dels Països Baixos, com els Anjou, els Orleans i els Borgonya, que s'havien enfrontat en la Guerra dels Cent Anys a la primera meitat del segle i que majoritàriament havien estat enemics d'Alfons.¹⁹

Pero ellos mismos señalan un poco más adelante una contradicción con ese ambiente italiano, porque *la muller del marquès de Montferrat es diu Andrea, nom de fonts que a Itàlia és masculí*.²⁰

En 2011 publiqué en *Clarín* el comienzo de mi investigación; señalaba la obra de Joanot Martorell, el *Tirant lo Blanc*, como fuente esencial del *Curial* y enlazaba el *Petit Jean de Saintré* con la

es dividido en tres libros, yo bien se trata de una imperdonable distracción o bien de una audacia digna de Unamuno o de Pirandello que, en el tercer libro, Melchior del Pando diga a Curial, hablándole en estilo directo: *‘E faç conclusió que millor partit te'n portes que no deixes a la Güelfa, segons en l'altre libre et diguí’*”. Riquer, Martí de. *Literatura catalana medieval*. Barcelona: Ajuntament de Barcelona, 1972: 109.

16. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 170.

17. Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*. Madrid: Cátedra, 2000: 292.

18. “El Curial es una obra planificada con cuidado, que tiene poco que ver con una novela que se engordando a golpe de inventiva, colgando episodios de un hilo, como ocurre a menudo en el Tirant lo Blanc. Fueron calculadas la medida de las dimensiones, la división en libros, la reiteración de motivos simbólicos y la cronología interna. Cada una de las partes del Curial va encabezada por un prólogo que indica el alcance temático y moral de la ficción”. Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. “Introducción...”: 19.

19. “El Curial está escrito en una prosa trabajada, clara y elegante, comprensible desde el catalán literario actual”; “La segunda mitad de la década de los años cuarenta del siglo XV, cuando Alfonso IV el Magnánimo se acababa de instalar en el trono de Nápoles (1442), podría proceder a la redacción del Curial, de acuerdo también con el trato benevolente que reciben las grandes casas nobles de Francia y los Países Bajos, como los Anjou, los Orleans y los Borgoña, que se habían enfrentado en la Guerra de los Cien Años en la primera mitad del siglo y que en su mayoría habían sido enemigas de Alfonso”. Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. “Introducción...”: 111.

20. “La esposa del Marqués de Montferrat se llamaba Andrea, nombre de pila que en Italia es masculino”. Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. “Introducción...”: 43, 46.



canción de Rigaut de Berbezilh para trazar el esquema narrativo que sustenta la obra, enumeraba otras huellas de lectura de obras que pueden verse en el texto del *Curial*: desde *La Celestina*, *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes*, *El cortesano* del valenciano Luis Milán, *El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* a las *Novelas ejemplares* y las *Relaciones de la vida del escudero Marcos de Obregón*.²¹ Hay más de las que indiqué, pero dejo para otro lugar seguir analizando la marcada presencia del *Quijote* en el *Curial* y de la obra que tantos motivos literarios le presta: el *Tirant lo Blanc*. Como es indudable que una creación literaria supuestamente del siglo XV no puede ofrecer manifestas concordancias con textos posteriores, esas huellas de lectura son la prueba de que el lector que tuvo en sus manos esos textos era un escritor muy posterior, un erudito con una formación muy sólida, que conocía muy bien la literatura románica.

No solo es la suma de esas trazas de textos posteriores (a los que añadí las más llamativas de las novelas de Walter Scott),²² sino que es la misma concepción literaria de la novela como fruto de la imitación compuesta lo que desvela el perfil de su genial creador, el gran erudito Milà i Fontanals. Voy a analizar su construcción para ponerlo de relieve; pero antes quiero presentar a un personaje histórico, un general, algunos años contemporáneo de Milà, que tuvo una acción destacada en la toma de Barcelona por los Cien Mil Hijos de San Luis (1823) y que sorprendentemente se llama como el protagonista de la novela: Curial.

4. El general Curial y su quinta división en tierras catalanas

En el pilar Este del Arco de Triunfo de la Avenida de los Campos Elíseos cualquier curioso puede leer, en la columna 17, el nombre de Curial: fue uno de los generales de Napoleón. Philibert-Jean-Baptiste-François Curial nació el 21 de abril de 1774 en Saint-Pierre-d'Albigny, en la Saboya, entonces aún italiana. El abuelo paterno era campesino, y el materno, abogado, como su padre, que en 1792, cuando las tropas francesas invadieron Saboya, se puso a su lado. Sus dos hijos se enrolaron en el ejército; uno de ellos, nuestro general Curial, logró alcanzar los más altos honores por su heroísmo en numerosas batallas en el ejército de Napoleón; luchó en tantas tierras como lo hizo el emperador: desde Egipto a Rusia, y, por supuesto, en España; participó heroicamente en las batallas de Iena, Eylau, Essling, Wagram... En 1814 Napoleón lo nombra conde del Imperio; pero no acude con rapidez en su ayuda en sus últimos momentos de desgracia, y en cuanto se restaura la monarquía borbónica con Luis XVIII, Curial se rendirá a sus pies. Napoleón, a la vuelta de Elba, le retirará su favor, y el General ve frenada su carrera. Tendrá que esperar a la restauración borbónica para recuperar sus cargos cortesanos y para seguir aumentando sus honores. Miembro de la Cámara de los Pares, Gentilhombre de la Cámara del Rey, Primer Chambelán, *Maître de la Garde-Robe*, Caballero de las Órdenes del Santo Espíritu y de San Miguel, Gran Cruz de la Legión de Honor, Comendador de San Luis, Gran Cruz de la Orden de San Fernando...

Su carrera y su salud empezarán a declinar tras una desgraciada caída camino de Reims para asistir a las fiestas de coronación del nuevo —y ultrarrealista— rey Carlos X, en mayo de 1825. El coche en el que iba con otros tres grandes nobles seguía inmediatamente a la carroza real; al desbocarse los caballos de esta, tuvieron que ir al galope para seguirla; se logró frenarlos de golpe,

21. Navarro, Rosa. "Misterios en una extraña novela: 'Curial e Güelfa'". *Clarín*, 96 (2011): 3-11.

22. Navarro, Rosa. "'Curial e Güelfa', 'mélange de gothique et de Renaissance'", *El texto infinito. Tradición y reescritura en la Edad Media y el Renacimiento*, Cesc Esteve, ed. Salamanca: Sociedad de Estudios Medievales y Renacentistas, 2014: 191-225.

y el coche, para evitar el choque con la carroza, no tuvo tanta fortuna y se precipitó a un foso. El General Curial acaba con dos costillas hundidas y con la bala que ya tenía alojada en el pecho de una batalla africana acercándose —parece— peligrosamente al corazón. No se recuperó nunca del todo de las secuelas de la caída aunque fue destinado aún con un alto cargo —*Directeur du Camp*— a Saint-Omer. Morirá el 30 de mayo de 1829.

Si hablo de este General es por su presencia en la guerra de Cataluña, en 1823, a la cabeza de la quinta división de los Cien Mil Hijos de San Luis —llamada “división Curial”—, bajo el mando del mariscal Moncey.

Fue en 1823, cuando entraron en España los Cien Mil Hijos de San Luis, las tropas francesas que mandó Luis XVIII en ayuda de Fernando VII contra los liberales y defensores de la Constitución de Cádiz. Al frente del ejército francés iba el duque de Angulema, que luego reinará como Carlos X; las tropas que invaden Cataluña lo hacen bajo el mando del mariscal Moncey, duque de Conegliano, y su quinta división tiene como jefe al General Curial.

La *Gaceta de Madrid* nos proporciona datos sobre las operaciones militares del general, de nuevo en España, pero bajo otro patrón (no con Napoleón, sino bajo los Borbones). Así sabemos como “el día 24 de mayo a las dos de la mañana, las tropas de la quinta división, mandadas por el teniente general conde Curial, han sido atacadas en Mataró por los generales revolucionarios Milans y Llovera”. El resultado es que

la quinta división no ha perdido más que tres hombres muertos y ha tenido quince heridos. El teniente general conde Curial hace el mayor elogio del valor con que las tropas de S. M. han sostenido el honor de nuestras armas. El resultado de este acontecimiento ha desanimado enteramente el partido revolucionario que hay en Barcelona²³.

Es noticia fechada a primero de junio de 1823. El 19 de julio se publica el parte de guerra que el mariscal Moncey ha enviado al Ministro de la Guerra dándole cuenta de cómo se ha logrado el 23 de junio vencer al enemigo en Molins de Rey, lugar estratégico para Barcelona por su puente. Es también el General Curial quien logra la victoria primero y luego bloquea la ciudad de Barcelona: “Mientras la división Curial ejecutaba las operaciones de bloqueo, ha hecho el enemigo una salida en dos columnas, la una por Monjuí y la otra por Barcelona”. Y el 7 de julio, a media noche, el mariscal duque de Conegliano le dice al ministro secretario de Estado de la Guerra: “Monseñor: El movimiento sobre Barcelona de la quinta y décima división comenzará mañana 8 de julio”.²⁴

En 1835 se publican en Barcelona, traducidas, las *Memorias sobre la guerra de Cataluña, en los años 1822 y 1823* de Florencio Galli, “edecán del general Mina”; y desde su posición privilegiada en el bando contrario, en el de las tropas constitucionales mandadas por Espoz y Mina, narra la derrota que sufrieron en Cataluña ante las tropas francesas. Cierra su crónica con la “capitulación de Barcelona”:

Ya no existía nuestro ejército más que en el nombre, mientras se aumentaba extraordinariamente el de los enemigos. Sujetado el Aragón, pudieron las tropas del mariscal Lauriston acercarse a las de Moncey y no formar con estas, por decirlo así, más que un solo cuerpo [...]. Sosteníase en verdad vigorosamente Barcelona, y hostigábase a sus sitiadores con no interrumpidas salidas.

23. Navarro, Rosa. “El general Curial y la literatura”. *Clarín*, 108 (2013): 9.

24. Navarro, Rosa. “El general Curial...”: 9.



No pueden resistir, y se firma la capitulación; “Tarragona y Hostalrich siguieron la suerte de Barcelona”.²⁵ El general Curial con su quinta división tuvo parte en todo ello.

Como hemos visto, no le quedaba ya mucho tiempo para actuar en el teatro de la guerra ni conseguir más honores o puestos. Su nombre, sin embargo, no solo está en el Arco de Triunfo francés, sino que nos resulta muy familiar porque coincide con el del protagonista del *Curial e Güelfa*.

Voy a analizar ahora, como he anunciado, el esquema sobre el que se construye la novela.

5. La estructura narrativa del *Curial e Güelfa* y sus orígenes

La fuente esencial de la historia de la pareja protagonista del *Curial* es la de *La dame des Belles Cousines* y de su joven, valiente y guapo protegido, *Petit Jehan de Saintré*, de Antoine de la Sale, en la obra del mismo nombre que el escritor dedicó a Jean d’Anjou, el duque de Calabria y de la Lorraine, en 1459. La novela catalana es una historia de amor, pero también de formación de un guapo adolescente, Curial, que se convertirá en un valiente y famoso caballero andante. La educación caballeresca de Curial es posible gracias a la Güelfa, una bella y rica joven, viuda del señor de Milà —Milán—, hermana del marqués de Monferrat, que se enamora de él y se convierte en protectora del muchacho. Es ella quien le dará dinero y lo hará a través de su consejero Melchior de Pando. Esa es la deuda esencial del *Curial* al *Petit Jehan de Saintré*, en donde se calla el nombre de la dama —se la designa solo por su parentesco real— por lo que va a suceder, *mais de son nom et signourie l’istoire s’en taist, à cause de ce que cy apres purrez veoir et oyr*.²⁶ Ella desempeña el papel que tendrá la Güelfa —que tampoco es un nombre propio de dama— y dirigirá con inteligencia la educación en la corte del guapo e inteligente adolescente, en los estudios, en las armas, hasta que llegue a ser el más famoso caballero andante. Y, sobre todo, le dará continuamente dinero y joyas, que se precisan con minuciosidad. Vestidos, joyas, comidas tienen una presencia destacadísima en la novela francesa —mucho más aún que en el *Tirant*—, como la tendrán en el *Curial*.

El comienzo de las dos historias de amor es muy parecido. En la novela de Antoine de la Sale, la joven y bella viuda, que no quiere volverse a casar, decide *que vraiment elle vouloit en ce monde faire d’aucun jeune chevalier ou escuyer ung renommé homme*; observa las costumbres y condiciones de todos los jóvenes y muchachos de la corte, para escoger uno entre ellos, *mais à la parfin sur le petit Saintré s’arresta*. ¿Y quién era ese pequeño Saintré? El hijo mayor del señor de Saintré, de la Touraine, que a sus trece años sirve como paje al rey de Francia, y por sus cualidades destaca entre todos: sabe cabalgar muy bien, cantar, bailar, *jouer à la paume*, correr, saltar; de tal forma que el rey, la reina, los señores, damas y demás gentes, todos lo aprecian muchísimo. No es raro, por tanto, que *La dame des Belles Cousines* se fije en él.²⁷

La Güelfa es la joven viuda del señor de Milà, con el que se había casado a los trece años; dos años después, al perder a su esposo, se ve rica y señora de Milán, y no puede domeñar lo que su juventud conlleva, como dice el narrador: *no podent resistir als naturals apetits de la carn, qui ab con-*

25. Galli, Florencio. *Memorias sobre la guerra de Cataluña, en los años 1822 y 1823*. Barcelona: Imprenta de A. Bergnes, 1835: 240-243.

26. “De todos modos, la historia calla sobre su nombre y señoría, a causa de lo que después podréis ver y oír aquí”. La Sale, Antoine de. *Le Petit Jehan de Saintré*. París: La Renaissance du Livre, 1911: 13.

27. “Realmente ella quería en este mundo transformar cada joven caballero o escudero en un hombre afamado”. La Sale, Antonio de. *Le Petit Jehan de Saintré*... : 13.



tinuus punyiments incessantment la combatiem;²⁸ de tal forma que piensa que *si per ventura ella amàs secretament algun valerós jove, puys que algun no se'n apercebés no seria desonestar*²⁹ —no hay que olvidar que el secreto será la esencia de la relación amorosa entre *Ma dame* y *Petit Jehan*—. Examina a todos los que servían en casa de su hermano, el marqués de Montferrat, y entre ellos escoge al joven y guapo Curial, *molt savi segons la sua edat, pensà que seria valent home si hagués ab què*. Las cualidades del paje del marqués serán las mismas que las de *Petit Jehan*, *bell cantador, e après sonar esturments (de què devench molt famós), axí mateix cavalcar, trobar, dançar, júnyer*.³⁰ Y su valoración reside en esencia sobre su apostura, dejando al lado su origen humilde; será la dama la que con su dinero le permitirá que haga hazañas como caballero y, por tanto, se labre la fama. No falta ni el detalle común del juego de la pelota (*jeux de paume*), porque para que la dama lo mire, cuando no justa, juega a pelota delante del palacio: *Curial tot lo jorn jugava pilota davant lo palau e era per ella contínuamente mirat e vist*;³¹ pero no es la pelota de goma, no inventada aún, sino la del *jeux de paume*; el propio *Petit Jehan* mira cómo juegan la primera vez que *Ma dame* habla con él: *... trouva le petit Saintré là, qui regardoit bas en la court les joueurs de paulmes jouer*.³²

Ma dame le dará dinero para su formación moral y caballerescas; su amor secreto dura dieciséis años; pero ella siempre quiere llevar las riendas en ese juego cortesano y amoroso. Y cuando él, sin consultarle, decide seguir con sus hazañas caballerescas, ella se enfada muchísimo porque lo quiere junto a ella en la corte; y para olvidarlo, consolará su tristeza y su soledad con un fornido abad de provincias, al que convertirá en su amante.

La novela de Ghismonda y Giscardo (*Decameron*, IV, 1), citada en el *Curial*, tiene en común con estas dos historias el punto de partida: la bella y joven viuda que, no resistiendo el *concupiscible disidero*, busca entre los servidores de palacio a un joven digno de ser amado y elige al joven y apuesto Giscardo, de baja condición, pero que reúne todas las cualidades. Sin embargo, tanto *Madame* como la *Güelfa* son mujeres con dinero y libertad para darlo (Ghismonda depende de su padre, el príncipe Tancredo), y no solo eligen a un joven paje, sino que hacen posible que se convierta, gracias a su ayuda monetaria, en un famoso caballero andante. El final trágico de la novela de Boccaccio solo presta el motivo del corazón del enamorado servido como comida a la dama para un sueño de Curial,³³ aunque en él se mezcla el comportamiento del pelícano, según los Bestiarios medievales, porque es ella misma la que le da su corazón para que coma; y además aparece en otros muchos textos, como en un relato del *Novellino*, muy cercano al que inspirará el final del *Curial*, y que le dará material para el episodio de las monjas, como diré.

No voy a entrar en otros detalles que el *Curial* toma de *Petit Jehan de Saintré* (donde se menciona a Bouciquault y a *Jehan le Maingre*, al duque de Esterich y al señor de Montferrant, como en la novela catalana), porque lo que me interesa es trazar nítidamente el esquema constructivo de la obra.

28. Y esa descripción del deseo está muy bien en un texto religioso como el *Mirall dels divinals assots* de Pere Martínez, en donde figura: *Lo glorios Sant Pau, tement aquest lligam que entr-ells dos [lo cors i la carn] es, e conexent les temptacions e punyiments espessos de la carn*. Martínez, Pero. Obras, ed. Martí de Riquer. Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, 1946: 37.

29. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 26-27.

30. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 30.

31. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 47.

32. "Encuentra allá el pequeño Saintré, quien miraba a los jugadores del juego de palma en el patio". La Sale, Antoine de. *Le Petit Jehan de Saintré*...: 16.

33. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 106.



Si el punto de arranque de *Curial e Güelfa* es una clara imitación del *Petit Jehan de Saintré*, el desenlace final lo es de la novela LXIV del anónimo *Novellino* italiano, o *Cento novelle antiche*, que a su vez había imitado la historia del trovador Ricardo de Barbessieu (Rigaut de Berbezilh), autor de *Atrèssi con l'orifanz*, la canción que en el reelato catalán se dice que compuso Curial en África al recordar la condición que le había puesto la Güelfa para su perdón.

La Güelfa se enfurece con Curial porque los dos viejos envidiosos —al modo de los *lausengiers*— le hacen creer que en París se ha ido de la lengua, presume de estar casado con ella y de haber consumado el matrimonio, y dice que por esta razón le daba ella todo el dinero que necesitaba.³⁴ La dama jura que solo perdonará al caballero si el rey y la reina de Francia y toda la corte y todos los enamorados reunidos en las justas del Puig de Nostra Dona³⁵ pedían a gritos *mercè* —gracia, piedad— para él.³⁶ Fue Menéndez y Pelayo quien señaló la fuente del *Novellino*;³⁷ pero él remitía a la obra esencial de su maestro Milà i Fontanals *De los trovadores en España*, porque es él quien relaciona las dos obras y expone minuciosamente la historia,³⁸ que es una glosa a la canción de Berbezilh: “Así como el elefante, que cuando cae no se puede levantar hasta que los otros, gritando, con su voz lo enderezan...”.³⁹ Y concluye:

Es de advertir que si bien la biografía de Barbessieu no habla del Puy, cuenta el hecho que motivó la poesía y, en efecto, los versos: ‘*E si la cortz del Puei e l ric bobans... No-m relévan, jamais non serai sors*’ dan más razón a esta parte de la novela que a la biografía.

Y menciona también “que el gavilán que debía coger el caballero que se proponía costear la fiesta era tenido por el señor del Puy y no puesto en un asta”.⁴⁰ Ese gavilán aparece en el relato del *Novellino* así: *In quello giorno, ordinaro la festa, e poneasi uno sparviere di muda, in su un’asta*, y aquél que se lo llevaba en el puño es quien pretendía costear la fiesta.⁴¹

En la novela italiana —la LXIV—, la historia sucede en el mismo lugar de Provenza, Puy de Notre Dame, y la dama no quiere saber nada del caballero porque él ha presumido de amarla rompiendo el secreto de su amor cortés. El narrador oculta el nombre del joven, *pognamli nomme messer Alamano*; pero sí dice el de la dama, *madonna Grigia*, que, al saber que él ha confesado que la ama y sirve, lo despide. El caballero, desesperado, sin decir nada a nadie, se hace ermitaño. Un día, los jóvenes del Po, cazando, llegan a su refugio y, sin reconocerlo, le cuentan lo sucedido, se lamentan de haber perdido a la flor de los caballeros, pero le dicen que tienen esperanza de que él participe en el torneo que está a punto de celebrarse. Así lo hará, y, al verlo, todos le piden que cante; pero él solo lo hará si logra el perdón de la dama, que le va a exigir que cien barones, cien caballeros, cien

34. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 269.

35. El nombre de ese lugar francés se transforma al poco en el *Curial* en su equivalente: Santa María del Puig, lugar emblemático en el reino de Valencia mencionado en la *Crònica* de Ramon Muntaner.

36. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 287.

37. Menéndez Pelayo, Marcelino. *Orígenes de la novela*. Santander: Aldus, 1943: I, 390.

38. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España*. Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1966: 105-107.

39. Sigo la traducción de: Riquer, Martí de. *Los trovadores. Historia literaria y textos*. Barcelona: Planeta, 1975: I, 290.

40. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España*...: 107.

41. “Aquel día, durante la Fiesta, un halcón se posó sobre la barra”. *Il Novellino (Le cento novelle antiche)*, intr. Giorgio Manganelli. Milán: Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli, 1999: 4, 73.

damas y cien doncellas griten a coro *mercè* (“piedad”) para el pobre caballero y gran trovador. En la fiesta de la Candelaria, irá a la iglesia, en donde está toda la gente reunida, y cantará una *molto bella canzonetta* que había compuesto, que no es otra que *Altresi come il leofante / quando cade, non si può levare / e li altri, al lor gridare, / di lor voce il levan suso; / e io voglio seguir quell’uso*. Y todo el mundo, al escucharlo, grita *mercè*, y la dama le perdona.⁴²

Curial llega al torneo de Santa Maria del Puig con un escudo negro y *ab un falcó encapellat pintat en mig*, precedido por seis pajes a caballo ricamente vestidos. Se acerca a la reina y se dirige a ella, al rey y a todos los presentes diciendo: *Yo-us suplich que, demanant mercè, me obtengats perdó, a grans crits, de una senyora que diu que és mal contenta de mi*. Rogará el rey, la reina y al final toda la corte:

*Vírats senyors e senyores en gran nombre e, finalmente, tota la cort, per part del cavaller, cridar a la senyora no coneguda: “Mercè! Mercè! Mercè!”. Los crits foren tan grans que no-s oyen uns a altres; e quatre reys d’armes e molts harauts, vestits de la liurea de Curial, anàvan per tota la plaça cridant mercè, e convidant e animant les gentes a cridar.*⁴³

Tras el clamor general, Curial saca un estandarte negro, *ab lo falcó ja emperò desencapellat*. Así podrá acabar felizmente la historia de amor del joven y apuesto caballero. Es evidente también que este halcón está directamente relacionado con el gavilán del relato, aunque su función sea distinta.

Pero no es el único préstamo que toma el autor del *Curial del Novellino*, porque, como anticipé, poco antes el relato LXII, *conta una novella di messer Roberto*, en la que, como su mujer, la condesa, y sus damas se acuestan con Baligante, un portero que destaca por su gran estatura, lo mandará matar y *del cuore, fe fare una torta*, que presentará a las damas, que la comen. Al saberlo todo, se avergonzarán de su comportamiento y se harán monjas de un monasterio; pero, coherentes con su forma de actuar, en él instauran una costumbre, que comienza así:

*Quando elli vi passasse alcuno gentiluomo con molti arnesi, ed elle il faceano invitare e facèanli grandissimo onore. E la badessa e le suore li veniano incontro e, in sul donneare, quella che più li piacesse, quella il servia ed accompagnava a tavola ed a letto.*⁴⁴

Aunque no llegan a tanto las divertidas monjas —todas ellas nobles damas— del monasterio al que llegan Curial y Festa, sí que puede comprobarse el gusto con que acogen al joven y las bromas sexuales que se atreven a hacer; y la que más, la priora, *jove e molt bella senyora*, que hace poco salió de la corte del rey de Francia y es Yoland le Mengre, hermana de Johan le Mengre; como resume el narrador: *Totes les monges feyen tanta festa a Curial e a Festa, e ab tanta alegria reyen, que açò era una gran meravella*.⁴⁵ Y la misma Festa les dice a las monjas: *Yo-us veig de tal pèl, que encara esta nit jugaríets a punyades qual de vosaltres l’auria*.⁴⁶ Otra de las ilustres monjas, Johanina de Borbó, bromeando, le pedirá a Festa que intercambien trajes y papeles, que ella se ofrece a acompañar como doncella a tal caballero andante. El final de la estancia en el monasterio nos ofrece una situación absolutamente insólita y asombrosa: *fet en terra un llit molt gran, totes vestides jagueren ensems, en manera que no*

42. *Il Novellino*...: 75.

43. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 242.

44. *Il Novellino*...: 70.

45. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 43.

46. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 44.



*s'i dormí, ans tota la nit en trufes e plaers totalment traspasaren.*⁴⁷ ¡Todas las monjas en una sola cama, compartiéndola con Festa, divirtiéndose toda la noche *en trufas e plaers*! Claro está que, cuando reaparezcan en el camino de caballero y doncella, lo harán remedando una escena del *Quijote*: *Curial viu gran pols de gents qui venien per lo camí*, y así lo confirma él mismo al decírselo al caballero con el que va a combatir: *Cavaller, yo veig gran pols e pens que sien gents qui vénen vers nosaltres*; ¡es la propia priora del monasterio con un buen grupo de monjas!⁴⁸ Ya sabemos que no eran monjas lo que escondían las dos nubes de polvo en el *Quijote*,⁴⁹ sino ejércitos según el caballero, y en realidad dos rebaños de carneros y ovejas. El *Curial* supera en ironía al *Quijote* en este pasaje, y lo hace porque su autor lo conoce bien.

La historia de amor de *Curial e Güelfa* comienza, pues, como la de *La dame des Belles Cousines* et *Petit Jehan de Saintré*; pero acaba como la de *madonna Grigia* y su gentil caballero trovador, al que se llama *messer Alamano*: con el perdón otorgado gracias a ese grito clamado por todos: *Mercè*! Y como lazo poético entre ambos está la canción de Rigaut de Belbeilh, que figura en la novela catalana como compuesta por el propio *Curial* en África.

Pero el escritor mezcla muchos otros ingredientes literarios a esta fábula compuesta, a esta estructura narrativa que comienza como el espléndido relato francés y acaba como la breve novelita del *Novellino*. Voy primero a resumir dos episodios de *Paris e Viana* que se recrean en el *Curial*.

6. Dos episodios del *Paris e Viana* en el *Curial e Güelfa* con un bordado tomado del *Cortesano* de Luis Milán

En tiempo del gran emperador Carlos, rey de Francia, hijo del rey Pepino, era delfín de la ciudad de Viana un noble llamado “Godofre de Lançó”, del linaje del propio Emperador, que estaba casado con la hija del conde de Flandes y tenía una hija bellísima llamada Viana. De ella se enamoraría un joven y apuesto caballero, Paris, *molt gran sonador e cantador*, y diestro en la caza y en las armas; era hijo de micer Jacobo, un noble hombre que vivía en las tierras del Delfín, y que, por tanto, no tenía la condición social privilegiada de Viana. El asedio amoroso a la dama lo emprenderá el apuesto joven usando sus habilidades, pero sin darse a conocer: primero será el canto y la música, y luego el ejercicio de las armas. Seduce y vence, pero sin revelar su identidad.

Viana no sabe quién es el caballero que tanta honra le hace porque Paris combate sin darse a conocer; el joven, tras el torneo de París, que ha ganado, se marcha a Bravante porque su amigo Eduardo quiere ver a su dama, y le deja a su madre la llave de su aposento diciéndole que no deje que nadie entre en él. Su padre enferma, y van a visitarlo el Delfín, y luego su mujer y su hija, Viana; la madre enseñará a las dos damas el castillo y también el aposento de su hijo. Como Viana ve en él *una cuberta de cavall tota blanca*, le parece reconocer en Paris al caballero desconocido, se altera tanto que casi no puede tenerse en pie y le pide a su madre que le deje reposar un poco en la cama. La dejan sola con su doncella y amiga Isabel, y las dos entran en el aposento de Paris:

47. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 47-48.

48. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 57-58.

49. Cervantes, Miguel de. *El ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1976:92-99 (primera parte, capítulo XVIII).

*Elles entraren en un estudi no gran, hon estaue la ymatge de Nostre Senyor ab lanties e canalobres d'argent. E aquí Paris se retraya per ses deuocions, e aquí era la bandera blanca e totes les joyes que ell hauia guanyades en la ciutat de Paris. Vaent Viana aquestes coses, fou certa que Paris era aquell qui tant hauia desitjat saber.*⁵⁰

Viana cogerá joyas para luego devolvérselas y poder hablar con él y que le confirme lo que ella ya sabe: que es el caballero desconocido. La entrada de Viana en el aposento tiene, pues, una finalidad: el reconocimiento de Paris como el caballero que tan bien la ha servido.

En el *Curial* hay dos escenas semejantes: la primera tiene lugar en el palacio del duque de Baviera. Tras la cena a la que invita el duque a Curial, no deja que se marche, *ans en la cambra on Laquesís dormir solia, molt ricamente aparellada, ordonà que dormís.*⁵¹ Será la duquesa la que le invite a dormir en la cama de su hija Laquesís: *Curial, vets ací lo llit de Laquesís; dormits bé e guardats-vos que no somiets algun mal.* Y en el aposento hay también un altar: *Havia en aquesta cambra un altar a una part, ab un retaule de mossenyor sant March, molt finamente acabat;* se acordará de la Güelfa, se arrodillará ante él sintiéndose culpable, suspirando y sollozando. Pero el dolor le dura poco: *Llevant-se del altar, se'anà al llit, lo qual era molt ricamente cubert d'un cubertor tot blanch, de domàs forrat de herminis, brodat d'ulls e de llaços d'or, segons era la roba de Laquesís. D'aquest mateix domàs eren les cortines, en aquesta matexa forma brodats.*⁵² Luego verá una recámara, donde Laquesís se arreglaba, *en la qual havia un altre llit molt bell e ricós, sobre'l qual trobà totes les joyes de Laquesís;* las mirará de una en una, asombrado de tanta riqueza, de tal forma que casi se le pasa la noche en tal contemplación.⁵³

La segunda escena tiene lugar poco después, en Montferrat, en el monasterio de la abadesa, en donde la Güelfa tiene un aposento, que no ocupa mientras los caballeros catalanes que van a combatir junto a Curial se alojan en él. Curial y Melchior llegan a él antes que los demás, y las monjas los reciben en procesión *e anaren ab ells a la esgleya cantant ymnes devots, e après anarense'n a la cambra on la Güelfa solia estar.* Curial dormirá en la cama de la Güelfa, y antes ve *l'altar de mossenyor sant March on la Güelfa s'agenyollava per dir oració, agenollà's tantost e, feta oració, se'n vench al llit de la Güelfa, e mirant-lo sospirà.*⁵⁴ La abadesa le dirá al día siguiente a ella: *En vostre llit ha dormit esta nit.*⁵⁵

En *Paris e Viana*, se justifica el uso de la cama y la mirada a las joyas porque estas son el elemento de la anagnórisis; en el *Curial e Güelfa*, se imita la escena, pero con ese toque irónico, moderno, que define al relato. Tienen además ambos relatos otra coincidencia significativa.

Curial, al regresar de sus siete años de cautiverio en África, se va a Monferrat y, en lugar de darse a conocer a la Güelfa, acude a comer las sobras que dan a los pobres a la puerta del palacio junto a su fiel compañero Galcerán de Mediona, y los dos cantan su canción. La fama llega a los oídos del marqués, y este se lo contará a su hermana, la Güelfa, que querrá oír a esos dos mendigos tan buenos cantores. No reconocerá a Curial, por su pobreza, larga barba, porque le dice que se llama Johan y es de Normandía, y sobre todo porque ¡habla francés! La dama le pide que le recite la canción, *que li digués de paraula* (Milà, como gran folklorista, sabe muy bien que se puede cantar

50. *Paris e Viana. Histories d'altre temps*, ed. Ramon Miquel y Planas. Barcelona: Nova Biblioteca Catalana, 1910: 96.

51. *Curial e Güelfa...*: I, 101.

52. *Curial e Güelfa...*: I, 103.

53. *Curial e Güelfa...*: I, 104.

54. *Curial e Güelfa...*: I, 173.

55. *Curial e Güelfa...*: I, 175.



una canción y no saber recitar su letra), y él lo hace.⁵⁶ La Güelfa, después de oírla, le preguntará por su autor, y el cautivo le dirá que la aprendió en Túnez; la dama confesará entonces que ella conoció a quien la compuso. Será el camino para que Curial le diga que es él, y le empiece a hablar en lengua lombarda, ¡solo así ella lo reconocerá!

En *Paris e Viana*, el protagonista y su amigo Adoardo de noche *sonauen e cantauen marauellosament* debajo de la ventana donde dormía la bella Viana.⁵⁷ Aunque el Delfín intentará apresarlos, ellos lograrán escapar sin daño del ataque de los diez hombres que manda. Si se enlaza este episodio del canto de los amigos con la vuelta de Paris de Alejandría, se advierte mejor que el relato es otra de las fuentes del *Curial*. El joven ha liberado al padre de su amada y como recompensa pide casarse con ella, pero sin darse a conocer. Va acompañado de un monje, que le ha ayudado en su empresa, y solo habla *morischi*; nadie le reconoce, ni su amigo Adoardo. Ante Viana, en cambio, calla, y es el monje quien habla; se le dará a conocer a través del anillo con un diamante que ella le había regalado, y luego empieza a hablarle: *E Viana, que estaua marauellada del diamant, fon mes marauellada com hoy parlar aquell qui james hauia parlat, en tant, que estech spantada*.⁵⁸ Paris le confesará entonces quién es.

Como ejemplo del procedimiento de taracea que lleva a cabo Milà en su obra uniendo diversas fuentes, añadiré la que le proporciona el bordado del cobertor blanco, de damasco, de esa cama donde se acuesta Curial: *brodat d'ulls e de llaços d'or, segons era la roba de Laquesis. D'aquest mateix domàs eren les cortines, en aquesta matexa forma brodats*.⁵⁹ Antes la había descrito así: *una roba de domàs blanch forrada de herminis, tota brodada d'ulls, dels quals exien laços d'or fets en diverses maneres*.⁶⁰

La enamorada doncella le regalará el vestido rogándole que se haga camisas —*jupons*— con él, y Curial manda a un camarero suyo que se las haga y desde entonces no viste otras. La Güelfa se enterará y, celosísima, le exigirá a Curial que se las entregue y además la tela que adornaba la cama de Laquesis (no sabíamos que ella se la había regalado). Y luego la Güelfa *secretament, mès mans a fer una tenda d'aquells paraments de cortines* y se la regala a Boca de Far,⁶¹ el contrincante de Curial y pretendiente suyo. ¡No creo que haya tela tan aprovechada en novela alguna! Pero es justo reconocer que la idea del bordado de los ojos y ojales es valenciana y no alemana; porque en *El cortesano* de Luis Milán un caballero disfrazado que representa el Deseo viene muy bien vestido, con “terciopelo carmesí, con unos ojos en blanco mirando al cielo, broslados entre muchas alas de oro de martillo, esmaltadas, y en un sombrero de lo mismo traía este mote que decía: ‘El deseo siempre vela, mira y vuela’”.⁶² Quien llevará una ala de oro en el estandarte será el duque de Orleans, y todos saben leer su razón: *Lo duch d'Orleans vench avant ab un standart vert e una ala d'or, e tothom pronusticà que, per ço com Laquesis era alamanya, feya aquella ala*.⁶³

Sobre la cama compartida de *Paris e Viana* y el *Curial e Güelfa*, está ese cobertor de damasco con el bordado del caballero del *Cortesano* de Luis Milán: así, con una taracea de erudición, con ideas de

56. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 167.

57. *Paris e Viana*...: 84.

58. *Paris e Viana*...: 125-126.

59. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 103.

60. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 99.

61. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 159.

62. Milán, Luis. *El cortesano*, ed. Marqués de la Fuensanta del Valle, José Sancho Rayón. Madrid: Colección de libros españoles raros o curiosos, 1874: 378.

63. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 130.



muchos textos leídos, se va formando la estofa de esa interesantísima obra “gótica” que es *Curial e Güelfa*.

7. Trovadores y otros personajes se asoman en la novela

No solo está presente Rigaut de Belbezilh con su canción, sino que otro trovador asoma aún más en la historia: es Raimbaut de Vaqueiras (1180-1205). Basta leer parte de su “Vida” para ver la razón de ello:

*Raembautz de Vaqueiras si fo fillz d'un paubre cavaillier de Proensa, del castel de Vaqueiras, que avia nom Peirors, qu'era tengutz per mat. En Raembautz si se fetz joglar et estet longua saison ab lo prince d'Aurenga, Guillem del Baus [...]. E venc s'en Monferrat, a miser lo marques Bonifaci. Et estet en sa cort lonc temps. E crec si de sen e d'armas e de trobar. Et enamoret se de la serror del marques, que avia nom ma dompna Beatritz.*⁶⁴

Este trovador, hijo de un pobre caballero de Provenza, se enamora de la hermana del marqués de Monferrat, que se llama Beatriz, a la que canta.⁶⁵ Riquer precisa que en realidad no fue la hermana, sino la hija; pero este detalle lo desconocía Milà porque siempre habla de ella como la hermana del marqués de Monferrat. Es la misma historia que vive Curial. Solo falta un pequeño detalle al que se puede llegar pensando como un ferviente admirador de Dante como lo fue el gran erudito catalán: Beatriz es por antonomasia Beatriz Portinari, la dama cantada por Dante, güelfo; es decir, ella es la Güelfa. ¿Sería esta la razón de que la protagonista del Curial no tenga nombre propio, sino el de una facción política?

La razón que acompaña a la más famosa de las estampidas provenzales, *Kalenda Maia*, de Vaqueiras, es todavía más significativa (sigo la traducción de Martí de Riquer):

*Ben avetz auzit de Rambaut qí el fo ni don, et si com el fo fait cavalier del marques de Monferrat, et com el s'entendeia en ma dompna Biatritz et vivia jausen per lo so amor. Et aujatz com el ac um pauc de temps gran tristessa. Et aiso fon per la falsa jen envejosa a cui nom plasia amrs ni dopneis, qe dizion paraolas a ma dompna Biatritz et encontra las autras dompnas, dicen aisi: 'Qí es aqest Rambautz de Vaqera, sitot lo marques l'a fait cavalier? Et si va entendre en tan auta dompna con voz o ez! Sapchatz qe no-n vos es onor, ni a vos ni al marques'. Et tan disseron mal, qe d'una part qe d'autra (si con fan las avols genz), que madompna Biatritz s'en corecet contra Rambaut de Vaqera.*⁶⁶

64. Traduce Martí de Riquer: “Raimbaut de Vaqueiras fue hijo de un pobre caballero de Provenza, del castillo de Vaqueiras, que se llamaba Peiror, que era tenido por loco. Raimbaut se hizo juglar y estuvo largo tiempo con el príncipe de Aurenga, Guilhem dels Baus [...]. Y fue a Monferrato, a mi señor el marqués Bonifacio. Y estuvo largo tiempo en su corte. Y prosperó en juicio, en armas y en trovar. Y se enamoró de la hermana del marqués, que se llamaba mi señora Beatriz”. *Los trovadores...*: II, 815.

65. En la Comedia de la gloria d'amor de Fra Rocabertí (Bernat Hug de, Rocabertí. “Comedia de la gloria d'amor”, Essai sur la littérature catalane, ed. François Roman Cambouliu. París: Durand, 1858: 110-176), se nombra en el canto IV a Gismunda y a Guiscard (los personajes de la primera novela de la cuarta jornada del Decamerón, mencionados por Laquesis en el Curial (*Curial e Güelfa...*: II, 201, 205) y casi a continuación se dice: Alsant los ulls io viu quasi torrat / estar d'amor N'Rambau de Vaqueres / e Beatrix nobla de Montferrat. Milà comenta la obra del “comendador Rocabertí”: “donde se introducen, como en el trionfo d'amore, varios personajes víctimas de su pasión” y cita esta estrofa en De los trovadores en España...: 455.

66. “Bien habéis oído quién fue Raimbaut y de dónde y cómo fue armado caballero por el marqués de Monferrato, y cómo estaba enamorado de mi señora Beatriz y vivía contento por su amor. Y oí cómo él tuvo gran tristeza durante poco tiempo. Y esto fue por la falsa gente envidiosa a quien no placían amor ni galantería, que decían a mi señora Beatriz, delante de las otras damas, palabras como estas: “¿Quién es este Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, aunque el marqués lo haya hecho caballero? ¡Y se enamora de tan alta dama como sois vos! Sabed que ello no os es honor, ni a vos ni al marqués.” Y tanto mal dijeron por una y por otra parte (como hacen las gentes perversas), que mi señora Beatriz se enfadó con Raimbaut de Vaqueiras”. Riquer, Martí de. *Los trovadores...*: II, 834-835.



Y hay que añadir un pequeño detalle más que redondea el préstamo trovadoresco: al final del relato el rey de Francia da como regalo a Curial *lo principat d'Orenge*;⁶⁷ y Vaqueiras es, en palabras de Martí de Riquer, “localidad provenzal cuyo castillo pertenecía al linaje de los Baus, a la sazón príncipes de Aurenga (Orange), en cuya corte, según afirma la Vida pero no confirman otras fuentes, Raimbaut ejerció la juglaría e inició su obra como poeta”.⁶⁸ Es decir Curial acaba siendo príncipe del lugar de nacimiento de Raimbaut, cuya vida remeda en la ficción (y suponemos que también señor de “Milà”).

En *De los trovadores en España* Milà i Fontanals dice que “Rambaldo de Vaqueiras (1180-1207) fue trovador y compañero de armas de Bonifacio, marqués de Montferrat, a quien siguió en expediciones oscuras y gloriosas”,⁶⁹ pero un poco más adelante le cambia el nombre al marqués y le da el de su hermano: “Este poeta, amigo y servidor de Guillermo IV de Baucio, conde de Orange, se muestra unido a su señor con aquella amistad fiel y entusiasta de que dio más tarde nuevas muestras de su hermandad de armas con Conrado de Montferrat”.⁷⁰

Ese lapsus del gran erudito al confundir a Bonifacio con su hermano Conrado⁷¹ sirve de puente para acercarnos a las aventuras literarias de este en Tierra Santa de la mano de Walter Scott, uno de los escritores más admirados por Milà.⁷²

Milà i Fontanals en su estudio de los *Poetas catalanes del siglo XIV* (que publicó en 1862), habla de Pere de Queralt, que fue “armado caballero en 1399 en la coronación de don Martín, quien en el mismo año y en 1401 confióle importantes comisiones cerca del rey de Túnez”. Y sigue contando el erudito:

Cuéntase que esta amistad nació de la siguiente manera: habiendo sido hecho Pere prisionero de los moros, quisieron estos convencerse de si su arrojo respondía realmente al sobrenombre que todos le daban, cor de roure, y así obligáronle a luchar con un león, al cual dio muerte el caballero catalán con un puñal. Esta hazaña, que le valió la libertad, hallábase representada en tres distintos lugares del monasterio de la Merced de Santa Coloma de Queralt y dio ocasión a que la ilustre familia del héroe adoptase por nuevas armas un león rampante en campo rojo, atravesado el pecho con un puñal.⁷³

Vemos ya algo de lo mucho que vivió Curial en África. Y más veremos si seguimos leyendo a Milà, pero esta vez en *De los trovadores en España*, al referirse al hermano del rey Alfonso el Sabio, “que se dio a conocer en Europa por su vida inquieta y aventurera”:

67. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 249.

68. Riquer, Martí de. *Los trovadores*...: II, 811.

69. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España*...: 47.

70. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España*...: 85.

71. El propio Milà indicará que la protagonista de la novela quinta de la primera jornada del *Decamerón* es la primera mujer de Conrado: “El marqués de Monferrato, hombre de gran valía, gonfalonero de la Iglesia, había pasado a ultramar en una gran expedición armada hecha por los cristianos”; pero al participar en esa cruzada había enviudado (el dato histórico sirve de ambientación aunque no respeta la veracidad), Boccaccio, Giovanni. *Decamerón*, ed. María Hernández. Madrid: Cátedra, 1994: 180.

72. Coll-Vinent, Sílvia. “Walter Scott en Milà i Fontanals, o la influència del ‘Romanticisme saludable’ (1839-1854)”. *El llegat Milà i Fontanals a la biblioteca pública episcopal de Barcelona*, Sílvia Coll-Vinent, Isabel de Colmenares, eds. Barcelona: Universitat Ramon Llull, 2011: 89-116.

73. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *Estudios sobre Historia, Lengua y Literatura de Cataluña*...: III, 330.

El infante D. Enrique, hermano del rey, vencido en 1259 por D. Nuño de Lara, alcaide de Jerez, que envió el rey contra el infante rebelde, se refugió en Túnez, donde permaneció algunos años sirviendo al rey moro, hecho mencionado en unos de los serventesios de Ramon de Lator de Marsella.

Sirvió luego a Carlos de Anjou, intervino en la batalla de Benevento (1265), que dio a Carlos el cetro de Nápoles y Sicilia. “Y al año siguiente se unió con su hermano Fadrique, que seguía el partido de Conradino”.⁷⁴

No es, pues, extraño que Curial tuviera en un don Enrique de Castilla a un gran defensor cuando estaba en el foso de los leones: ... *un cavaller d'Espanya, qui don Henrich de Castella havia nom e tenia mil rocins de christians e gatges del rey, suplicà al rey que fes aquella gràcia a-N Ramon Folch*.⁷⁵ La gracia que pedía el embajador era la libertad de Curial.

No nos asombramos tampoco al ver que el contrincante de Aznar de Atrosillo, el caballero Guilalmes de la Tor se llame igual que el trovador Guilhem de la Tor (circa 1216-circa 1233), porque, aunque este nació en el Périgord, se fue a Lombardía; en Milán se enamoró de la joven y bella esposa de un barbero, a la que raptó y llevó a Como, y la leyenda (o la Vida) dice que murió de dolor tras la muerte de su amada; son personajes de su *Treva Selvaggia* y Beatrice, las dos hijas de Corrado Malaspina.⁷⁶

No solo se asoman trovadores en el *Curial*, sino también pueden verse en su texto huellas de episodios de dos Crónicas catalanas, aunque sazonadas con detalles de novelas góticas de Walter Scott.

8. La presencia de la *Crònica* de Ramon Muntaner y de la *Crònica* de Bernat Descolt

El autor del *Curial* había leído ambas crónicas y se inspira en episodios de ambas para crear otros semejantes en su relato; Lola Badia y Jaume Torró ya han señalado *afinitats manifestes del Curial amb les cròniques de Desclot i de Muntaner*,⁷⁷ aunque no se plantean cómo el autor anónimo pudo tenerlas a su alcance junto con las otras obras que señalan como fuentes. No hay más que leer en la *Crònica* de Desclot *Com lo comte de Barcelona anà en Alemanya, ab sol un cavaller, per excusar l'emperadriu d'Alemanya* para ver que es el modelo de la batalla de Curial y de Jacob de Cleves en defensa de Cloto, la hija del duque de Baviera, duquesa de Ostalriche y prima hermana de la emperatriz, falsamente acusada de adulterio por dos malvados. El caballero que acompaña al conde de Barcelona es Bertran de Rocabrúna. Ambas damas están en el cadalso con la leña a sus pies esperando el juicio de Dios en forma de victoria del caballero defensor o de los dos acusadores, los lausengers. El conde de Barcelona vence y mata a uno de los dos caballeros alemanes, y el otro confiesa delante de toda la corte la falsedad de su acusación: *Jo dic davant tota la cort que ço que nós havem dit de madona l'emperadriu, dixem per enveja e per mala voluntat*. El conde llevará al acusador delante de la emperatriz: *Ab tant menà-lo hom denant l'emperadriu, qui estava en una casa de fust que*

74. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España...*: 192-193.

75. *Curial e Güelfa...*: III, 157.

76. Riquer, Martí de. *Los trovadores...*: II, 1171-1172. Auger Bellian, el viejo caballero defendido por Curial, tiene dos hijos cobardes: Perrin y Hans (*Curial e Güelfa...*: I, 57). Perrin es el nombre del juglar que Guiraldo de Borneil envía al rey de Aragón. Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. *De los trovadores en España...*: 128.

77. Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. “Introducció...”: 62-65.



*hom li havia feita denant lo camp, e aquí de prop havia bastit un gran foc, que si el comte fos vençut, que fóra cremada.*⁷⁸ Y ella lo perdonará.

En el *Curial*, la batalla será doble: combatirán Curial y Jacob de Cleves contra Parrot de Sant Laydier y Othó de Cribaut respectivamente. Y Othó confesará que la duquesa era inocente, pero que Jacob, el caballero sobre el que recaía la acusación del adulterio de la duquesa, *m'avía tret de ma honor, lançant-me de la privadesa del duch*; era, por tanto, la venganza la base de la terrible acusación. El final no es el perdón, sino el castigo de los falsos acusadores: *La duquesa fonch devallada del cadafal, e muntarent-hi los dos falsos cavallers, e encès lo foch, moriren a cruel e vergonyosa mort.*⁷⁹

También cuenta Desclot el viaje del rey Pedro III a Francia disfrazado, que está en la base del episodio del caballero del escudo negro del *Curial* en el torneo de Melú. Pero como está también narrado, y con más detalles, en la *Crònica* de Ramon Muntaner, voy ahora a este relato historio-gráfico.

El enfrentamiento entre Carlos de Anjou y el rey Pedro III por Nápoles y Sicilia culmina en el desafío de Burdeos. Como el rey de Inglaterra no puede garantizarle al rey de Aragón su seguridad, le aconseja que no acuda a la batalla personal en la ciudad francesa. Pero Pedro no está dispuesto a no comparecer; hará el viaje disfrazado como criado de un mercader, Domingo de la Figuera; así le indica a este su plan.

*Així que nostra voluntat és que aital jorn que deu ésser lo jorn qui és emprès, que siam al camp de la batalla, en Bordeu; e que nós que hi anem en persona en aital manera: que vós irets cavalcant en un bell cavall, con a senyor, e nós irem així con a escuder vostre, en un altre cavall, ab una ascona muntera en la man; e haurem En Bernat de Peratallada, qui cavalcarà en altre cavall ab una sella de trossa, e portar-vos ha la trossa, qui serà lleugera, que no hi haurà mas la vostra gramalla e diners per despesa, e portarà altra ascona muntera.*⁸⁰

Así lo harán, y cuando el rey llegue cerca del campo de batalla, en Burdeos, manda a su emisario Gilabert de Cruïlles, que estaba alojado allí, que vaya en busca del senescal diciéndole que un caballero del rey de Aragón quería hablar con él, y que fuera acompañado de un notario y seis caballeros. Ellos serán los que den testimonio —y un escribano lo pondrá por escrito— de la presencia del rey de Aragón en el campo de batalla el día fijado. El rey solo desvelará su identidad en el momento preciso y luego se marchará inmediatamente hacia Aragón, en la misma forma en que fue a Burdeos, pero yendo primero a Castilla y pasando por un camino distinto al de la ida.⁸¹

Este viaje del rey de Aragón, tan caballeresco y ocultando su identidad, está detrás del episodio de la presencia del propio rey Pedro III en Francia en el *Curial*, en el torneo de Melú. Así comienza el narrador a hablar de la llegada rey que, como caballero andante, cela su identidad:

*En aquest mateix temps, lo rey d'Aragó, que tres mesos o més havia cavalcant continuament, a forma de cavaller errant e, sens ésser estar conegut, havia fetes coses de son cors dignes de recordable veneració (e, sinó que no-s pertany a nostra matèria tractar sinó dels fets de Curial, yo scriuria ací alguns notables actes qui són venguts a notícia mia, los quals per les sues valeroses mans foren finats a honor sua, no menors ne de menor perill que aquells que de sus havets legits), tramès les sues tendes al camp (no riques, per ço que les endes no-l descobrissen), e manà que fossen fermades en lo pus desviable loch que s'i trobàs; e axí fonch fet.*⁸²

78. Desclot, Bernat. *Crònica*, ed. Miquel Coll i Alentorn. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1982: 68.

79. *Curial e Güelfa*...I: 83.

80. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*, ed. Marina Gustà. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1979: I, 138.

81. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: I, 141-142 y 146.

82. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 110-111.



Como los aragoneses acompañan a Curial y ellos reconocerán a su rey, le hablarán de él y le pedirán que lo acoja en su compañía, cosa que el rey hará; todos juntos serán conocidos como los caballeros del escudo negro. No falta la mención a Carlos de Anjou:

*E lo rey, qui havia un poch lo ventrell gros contra·ls franceses, per rahó del duch d'Anjou, qui havia mort son sogre, mirà vers aquella part on los angleses rompien lances contra·ls franceses, e axí, lo rey ficà sperons al seu cavall, apellat Pompeu, e sí anà vers lo duch d'Orleans.*⁸³

Sin embargo, su actuación en el torneo junto al joven Curial tiene otra fuente: *Ivanhoe* de Walter Scott. Los dos caballeros andantes que protagonizan esta novela gótica ocultarán celosamente su identidad al aparecer: Ivanhoe la revelará muy pronto, pero el Caballero Negro la esconderá hasta casi el final del relato porque es nada menos que Ricardo Corazón de León.

Cuando aparece el joven caballero en el torneo organizado por el príncipe Juan, solo se puede ver que es de mediana estatura y más bien delgado, *his suit of armour was formed of steel, richly inlaid with gold, and the device on his shield was a young oaktree pulled up the roots, with the Spanish word Desdichado, signifying Disinherited*,⁸⁴ y monta un gallardo caballo negro; por esta divisa que lleva será llamado el Caballero Desheredado.

En un momento del disputado torneo, el Caballero se encuentra en inferioridad de condiciones, atacado a la vez por Brian de Bois-Guilbert, Athelstane y Front-de Boeuf, y solo en ese momento, un guerrero que estaba en su séquito, de negra armadura y corcel del mismo color, fuerte y vigoroso, sin divisa alguna sobre su escudo, entra en la lucha y con facilidad pasmosa derriba a los dos últimos caballeros citados dejando solo al primero para el joven. Así termina el torneo de Ashby-de-la Zouche, y entonces se conocerá la identidad del Caballero Desheredado, Ivanhoe, al quitarse el yelmo y caer desmayado por las heridas recibidas.

El Caballero Negro seguirá presente en el relato, y su identidad se irá conociendo lentamente, primero por algunos personajes y solo al final se presentará como quien es: el rey de Inglaterra, Ricardo Corazón de León.

En el torneo de Melú del *Curial*, todos los caballeros que van con el rey de Aragón llevan el mismo escudo negro, aunque con divisa pintada en él, y con el toque cómico que caracteriza al *Curial*, porque dice el narrador *per ventura mal pintada, per ço que a la brevitat del temps no consentia que millor se fes*.⁸⁵ Tan característico es el escudo negro del grupo de caballeros que el duque de Orleans⁸⁶ hace trampa (¡detalle increíble entre caballeros andantes!) y le lleva a escondidas a Laquesis un escudo negro para que ponga encima la mano y luego él pueda afirmar. *Yo dich que la donzella que té l'escut negre és la pus bella del món*,⁸⁷ y así guarda su fe a Laquesis, aunque todos entienden que la doncella del escudo negro es Festa, la dama que, al acompañar a Curial, los aragoneses defienden.

83. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 114.

84. "su armadura estaba formada de acero, ricamente con incrustaciones de oro, y el dispositivo en su escudo representaba a un roble joven mostrando las raíces, con la palabra española *Desdichado*, que significa desheredado". Scott, Walter. *Ivanhoe*. Londres: Penguin Books, 1984: 96 (primera edición en 1819).

85. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 125.

86. El duque de Orléans es también personaje destacado en *Quentin Durward* y, del mismo modo que en el *Curial*, compete por el amor de la dama con el protagonista.

87. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 134.



El caballero del escudo negro herirá al propio rey de Francia, que, atrevido, se le ocurre entrar en liza, y tras su fracaso afirmará, contento, haber roto una lanza en el escudo del mejor caballero del mundo. El rey de Aragón es, pues, el caballero más valiente del torneo, a pesar de la presencia en él de Curial, que en ese momento está furioso, *encès per rahó de un anglès qui falsamente, ab una lança, l'avía ferit*.⁸⁸

Poco después el rey de Aragón tendrá que actuar como lo hizo el Caballero Negro: intervendrá atacando, como un león hambriento, para salvar a Curial, del mismo modo que Ricardo Corazón de León salvó a Ivanhoe, porque ambos jóvenes sufren el ataque de varios combatientes.

Al final del libro I del *Curial*, el narrador nos presenta al rey don Pedro. *cavaller molt rebust, forts e valent, lo qual mentre visqué féu de son cors en batalles moltes coses dignes de recordable veneració, axí contra sarrayns com altres gents*.⁸⁹ Será el generoso anfitrión de los tres caballeros aragoneses, Dalmau d'Oluge, Roger d'Oluge y Ponç d'Orcau, súbditos suyos, que vencieron a Gerardo de Perúgia, Frederico de Venosa y Salones de Verona, mientras Curial acababa con Boca de Far.⁹⁰

Con asombro vemos que manda a dos de sus hijos que alumbren la sala sosteniendo sendas antorchas (el otro les sirve la comida), aunque a veces descansan de su “oficio” de candeleros aprovechando la ausencia de su padre:

Los altres dos fills, don Jayme e don Frederich, stigueren als caps de la taula amb sengles torxes en les mans tant com lo sopar durà; e com se enujaven acomanaven-les algun poch a cavallers notables qui de prop los staven, emperò com viandes venien o lo res venia, ells prenien les torxes.⁹¹

Esta escena cobra sentido a la luz de otra obra de Walter Scott: *Una leyenda de Montrose*, fruto de una apuesta. Ante seis enormes candeleros de plata que iluminan la mesa de sir Miles Musgrave, le dicen a uno de los comensales, Angus MacAulay, un lord escocés, que en su mísero país no se podría encontrar riquezas como esas. El lord, para defender el honor de su tierra, afirmó que solo en su castillo había más candeleros y más preciosos que esos. No le queda plata alguna en él, pero lo que van a ver sus invitados ingleses es lo siguiente:

La larga mesa de roble se hallaba cubierta de viandas de todas clases, las sillas colocadas alrededor para los comensales, y detrás de cada una de ellas se encontraba un highlander de elevada estatura completamente armado y equipado según la usanza del país, con una ancha espada desenvainada en la mano derecha y la punta hacia el suelo, y en la izquierda una antorcha encendida que arrojaba sobre los objetos de la sala sus brillantes reflejos.⁹²

Los ingleses aceptan que han perdido la apuesta, porque evidentemente esos candeleros eran mucho más valiosos que los de plata de sir Musgrave. Milà le quita trascendencia a la anécdota y la convierte en otro guiño divertido en su espléndido *Curial*. Si el oficio de candeleros de los hijos del

88. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 139.

89. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 185.

90. No puede negarse que el nombre de “Salones de Verona” es cómico y nos habla de nuevo de la “moderna” ironía del narrador (no hay más que compararlo con el de Bonifaci de Verona, nombrado por Muntaner en su *Crònica*, II, 123, 126); en cambio, el de Boca de Far —tan parecido al de Simon de Far del *Tirant*— está muy presente en la *Crònica* de Muntaner como lugar geográfico: *a l'alba foren en Boca de Far, davant la torreta del far de Messina*. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: I, 103.

91. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 186.

92. Scott, Walter. *Una leyenda de Montrose*. Barcelona: Ramón Sopena, 1967: 64 (primera edición en 1819).

rey no deja de ser asombroso, ¡cómo iban a descansar de él aprovechando la ausencia de su padre, a guisa de traviesos jóvenes!

Volviendo a la *Crònica* de Ramon Muntaner, me voy a referir a otros detalles recreados en el *Curial*. Muntaner subraya cómo Jaime de Aragón invita al rey de Castilla a Valencia y no le deja gastar nada: *que anc un diner no despeneren, ell ni persona qui ab ell hi fos*,⁹³ y lo mismo hará más adelante, al pasar por sus tierras para ir al concilio de Lyon:

*E lo dit señor rei En Jacme d'Aragó e los infants hagueren gran plaer e pensaren d'ordonar per lla on començarien a entrar per llur terra entrò a Montpestller les viandes e tot ço que ops haurien. Que en tal manera dreçaren que jamés negun señor no fos tan bastat ab totes ses companyes com ell fos; e de res del dia que seria entrat en llur terra entrò que fos fora de Montpestleer, que no despesés lo rei de Castella res del seu, ne persona qui ab ell fos. E així se complí tan abundadament com davant havets oït que fo fet l'altra vegada con estec al regne de València.*⁹⁴

Es el comportamiento que tendrá Curial con los dos lausengiers, los dos ancianos envidiosos, causantes de su desdicha, cuando lo vayan a visitar a París; los va a recibir y se los lleva a su posada: *menà 'ls-se'ns a posar al seu hostal, e aquí los festejà e honrà molt, e ls donà tots temps, mentre allí stigueren, tot ço que mester havien, en manera que ells no despenien res*.⁹⁵

Lo Sanglier de Vilahir pone delante de su tienda un estandarte negro, *ab unes letres d'or molts grans qui dehien: 'Ahur'*.⁹⁶ En la *Crònica*, Muntaner cuenta cómo llegan cuatro barcas de Sicilia a pedir ayuda al rey Pedro de Aragón porque Carlos de Anjou tiene sitiada Messina, y los caballeros y ciudadanos que iban en ellas *vengren tots vestits de negre e ab les veles negres e ab senyeres negres* a pedirle *mercè*; y cuando el rey se decide a hacerlo, la gente grita *Aür! Aür!*;⁹⁷ es el mismo grito que los moros dan al ver las galeras de Corral Lança: *los sarraïns qui les veeren, que ja n'havien haüda llengua, cridaren en llur sarraïnesc: -Aür! Aür!*⁹⁸

También tienen en común ambos textos una comparación: la forma de expresar la espera de una anhelada presencia. En la *Crònica* de Muntaner, es al rey al que esperan en Sicilia: *e així, ab aquell guany tornà-se'n en Sicília, on tots los soldaders, així de cavall con de peu, l'esperaven així com los jueus fan Messies*.⁹⁹ Y es el propio Curial el esperado en las justas de Santa María del Puig: *Desijaven tots la venguda de Curial, pensant que aquell defendria lo restell, mas vanament lo speraven; decebuts eren com són los jueus del sperar Messies*.¹⁰⁰

En la *Crònica* se nombra varias veces a Blascó d'Alagó y a Joan Eiximinis d'Urrea en la campaña siciliana, y al duque d'Ostetric *qui és un dels majors barons d'Alemanya*,¹⁰¹ todos ellos presentes en el

93. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: I, 36.

94. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: I, 49-50.

95. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 213.

96. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 221.

97. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: I, 94.

98. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: I, 46.

99. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica*...: II, 62.

100. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 235.

101. *Curial e Güelfa*...: II, 184, 200, 204.



*Curial*¹⁰² como también lo está Ramon Folch de Cardona.¹⁰³ Y se menciona la ciudad griega Arta,¹⁰⁴ que tiene el famosísimo puente, cuya leyenda popular une su construcción al sacrificio de la mujer del maestro de la obra, cuyo cuerpo asentó sus cimientos; fue recogida por Milà i Fontanals¹⁰⁵ y pudo inspirarle el primer nombre de la doncella de la Güelfa, antes de pasar a ser Festa, en claro guiño literario a *Plaer-de-ma vida* del *Tirant*.

Pero tal vez el préstamo más relevante en este campo nominal sea el de un corsario genovés, que ataca la galera de mercadería en donde va Curial desde Génova camino de Alejandría: *Un corsari genovès, lo qual Ambrosino de Spíndola havia nom, hach sentiment Curial ésser molt rich, e per cobdícia d'aquella roberia, pensant que ab poch treball la hauria, mesa primeramente a punt una galera que tenia, de Portvndres partí;*¹⁰⁶ y también lo llama "Ambròsio de Spíndola". El nombre es un divertido cruce entre el del general Ambrosio de Spínola (1569-1630) y el de un personaje citado por Muntaner:

*Que dementre que la companya fo partida de Gal·lípol per anar sobre los alans, l'emperador ho sabé; e fo ventura que en aquella saó vengren divuit galees de genoveses, de què era capità ser Antonio Spíndola, e era vengut de Gènova en Costantinoble per menar en Llobardía lo fill menor de l'emperador per ésser marquès de Montferrat.*¹⁰⁷

El gran general español, de origen genovés, que fue gobernador del Milanesado, aparece como tal en la novela *Los novios* de Manzoni, tan admirada por Milà i Fontanals. En el *Curial* cruza ambos nombres: el de Antonio Spíndola con el de Ambrosio de Spínola; y el fondo es siempre el mismo: la Lombardía, el Montferrato.

No son los únicos "préstamos" que el gran erudito toma de Muntaner para su *Curial*, en esa mezcla cultísima de fuentes. Voy solo, para terminar, a referirme a la mención del Caballero de la Cota mal tallada. Tras uno de sus continuos *Què us en diré?*, que también aparecen en el *Curial*, pero que son también muletilla de otros muchos textos (desde el *Tristan en prose* a *Le Petit Jehan de Saintré*), Muntaner alaba la obra del rey comparándola con la de los grandes héroes de mundo caballeresco y cita al mencionado caballero: *que Galeàs, ne Tristany, ne Lancelot, ne Galvany, ne Boors, ne Palamides, ne Perceval lo Galois, ne el Cavaller ab la Cota mal tallada.*¹⁰⁸ También Ramon de Perellós al final del *Viatge del vescompte Ramon de Perellós i de Roda fet al Purgatori nomenat de Sant Patrici* lo menciona: *... arribí al port de Davre, on vi lo cap de Galvany, car aquí morí e així mateix la cota mal tallada car així s'apellava aquell cavaller que la portava.*¹⁰⁹

102. Son dos de los caballeros de Aragón presentes en el torneo de Melú: *l'altre ha nom don Blasco d'Alagó, e l'altre ha nom don Johan Ximenes de Urrea* (Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...*: II, 82) Ramon Folch de Cardona es el embajador del rey de Aragón en la corte del rey moro e interviene en el episodio de la lucha de Curial con el león (*Curial e Güelfa* ...: III, 153-157) y reconoce a Curial por su presencia en el torneo de Melú.

103. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...*: II, 55, 151.

104. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...*: II, 122, 152.

105. Resume la leyenda en: Milà i Fontanals, Manuel. "Cuentos y poemas de Grecia Moderna por M. Vretro", *Obras completas. Opúsculos literarios. Primera serie*, ed. Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo. Barcelona: Librería de Álvaro Verdaguier, 1892: IV, 581-584.

106. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III-23-24.

107. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...*: II, 99.

108. Muntaner, Ramon. *Crònica...*: I, 216.

109. Perellós, Ramon de. "Viatge del vescomte Ramon de Perellós i de Roda fet al Purgatori nomenat de Sant Patrici", *Novel·les amoroses i morals*, ed. Arseni Pacheco, August Bover i Font. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1982: 52.

Carlos Alvar dice del artúrico Caballero de la Cota Mal Cortada: “Keu acuña su sobrenombre tras presentarse el caballero en la corte de Arturo cubierto con la túnica, llena de jirones, que llevaba su padre cuando fue asesinado, prometiendo no quitársela hasta haber vengado esa muerte”.¹¹⁰ El *Tristan en prose* empieza con la marcha de Lancelot siguiendo el camino del caballero de la Cota Mal Cortada, y él va a ser el protagonista de las aventuras iniciales: *Or dist li contes que quant Lanselos se fu partis de la damoisele ki a lui estoit venue de par monsieur Tristan, ensi com je vous ai conté, il se mist tout maintenant a la voie après celui a la Cote Mautailie*.¹¹¹

Nunca se asocia a esa Cota Mal Cortada comicidad alguna, dada su trágica causa; y, en cambio, cuando la menciona Curial, lo hace festivamente. El episodio que desemboca en su mención imita otro del *Tirant lo Blanc*, que es el libro esencial para la creación del *Curial* porque se asoma en su textos en episodios y en detalles; del mismo modo que Carmesina dio a Tirant la camisa para que se la vistiera encima de la armadura, la Güelfa hará lo mismo. Bien es cierto que con una diferencia importante: el bordado que a cuatro manos hacen en ella la Güelfa y la abadesa, *axí per los pits com per les espatles de alt a baix, creus de sant Jordi, e semblantment per les mànegues*. Melchior de Pando será el encargado de llevársela al joven caballero. Curial, que tiene que enfrentarse a Boca de Far, se la viste: *E tantost s’armà e assajà’s l’alcandora, e, obrint-la en certes parts, feren tant que li vengué bé, jatsia que en los pits ne en les espatles no li cobria sinó fort poch, de què ell no curava gens*.¹¹²

El efecto que va a provocar es la risa: *Per què, muntant a cavall, en cavalls molt forts e valerosos, començaren a anar sots un estandart blanch ab creu vermella e tals paraments; mas tothom reya de la cota d’armes de Curial, veent que era camisa de dona*.¹¹³ Y, Curial, al darse cuenta de la risa, dice: *Ara pusch yo ésser apellat lo donzell de la cota mal tallada*.¹¹⁴

Esa risa está muy a menudo presente en el *Curial*; en este caso, parodia el sobrenombre de un caballero artúrico al modo que Cervantes se burla de lo caballeresco en su *Quijote*. Y esa risa desvela de nuevo al escritor de novela histórica, admirador de la ironía de Cervantes y... de Walter Scott.

El texto del *Curial* suma a las fuentes citadas otras muchas, que van de un raro escritor latino como Fulgencio a las famosísimas *Coplas* a la muerte de su padre de de Jorge Manrique. Y las mezcla, como indican muy bien Lola Badia y Jaume Torró en su edición crítica al comparar los registros de la prosa del *Curial* con el *Tirant*, reescribiéndolas: *l’Anònim reescriu de dalt a baix els estímuls literaris presos de les fonts [...] en comptes de reproduir parcialment mots, frases i motius en una xarxa intertextual no mancada de incongruències, com fa Martorell*.¹¹⁵ Y lo hace porque su autor es un escritor del siglo XIX que está escribiendo una novela histórica, gótica, y no del siglo XV.

110. Alvar, Carlos. *El rey Arturo y su mundo. Diccionario de mitología artúrica*. Madrid: Alianza Tres, 1991: 65.

111. *Le roman de Tristan en prose*, ed. Philippe Ménard. Génova: Droz, 1987: I, 63.

112. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 168.

113. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 174.

114. *Curial e Güelfa*...: I, 176.

115. “el Anónimo reescribe de arriba abajo los estímulos literarios tomados de las fuentes [...] en vez de reproducir parcialmente palabras, frases y motivos en una red intertextual no falta de incongruencias, como hace Martorell”. Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. “Introducció...”: 105.



9. De las Mitologías de Fulgencio a *La visión deleitable* de Alfonso de la Torre con elementos de las *Glosas* de Enrique de Villena y de las *Coplas* de Jorge Manrique

En el *Curial* tres de los cuatro caballos del Sol se llaman con los nombres que Fulgencio les dio en el libro I de sus *Mitologías*: *Erytreus*, *Acteon*, *Lampus* et *Filogeus*, y parten de su justificación de la cuádriga:

*Huic quoque quadrigam scribunt illam ob causam, quod aut quadripertitis temporum uarietatibus anni circulum peragat aut quod quadrifido limite diei metiatur spatium; unde et ipsis equis condigna huic nomina posuerunt, id est Erytreus, Acteon, Lampus et Filogeus. Erytreus Grece rubeus dicitur quod a matutino prosiliens limine rubicundus exurgat, Acteon splendens dicitur quod tertiae horae metis uehemens insistsens lucidior fulgeat, Lampus uero ardens dum ad umbilicum diei centratum conscenderit circulum, Filogeus Grece terram amans dicitur quod horae nonae procliuior uergens occasibus pronus incumbat.*¹¹⁶

Así aparecen nombrados en el *Curial*: ... e lo sol ab lo seu carro de quatre rodes tirat per aquells quatre cavalls, ço és, Titan, Etheus, Lampaus e Philogeus, venir fort yvarçosament.¹¹⁷ Y más adelante veremos esa división de funciones que les atribuyó Fulgencio:

*Com lo dia ja declinàs, e lo sol, menaçat per les tenebres qui ja s'aparellaven de venir, cuytàs los seus cavalls, dels quals lexats cansats los tres, ço és, Titan, Etheus e Lampaus, tirat solamente per Philogeus, desemparades més de les tres parts del dia, ab major velocitat que dir no-s pot, fugís vers lo regne d'Espèria.*¹¹⁸

Difiere de Fulgencio en el nombre de Titán, con el que a veces se designa al propio Sol, como dice Ovidio al comienzo de las *Metamorphoses*: *Nullus adhuc mundo praebebat lumina Titan*;¹¹⁹ y que erróneamente aplica al hermano de Saturno el mitógrafo latino; pero lo esencial es la coincidencia con el nombre de Filogeus. El pasaje es una muestra más del tono paródico que a menudo exhibe el *Curial* porque una cosa es que cada uno de los caballos esté relacionado con una parte del día, y otra cosa que una cuádriga pueda ser tirada por uno solo de los caballos mientras los otros se retiran, cansados.

Y es fundamental además la coincidencia porque no es el único pasaje que indica la lectura de Fulgencio, citado en el propio *Curial*, al comienzo del libro tercero: *E quant al integument d'aquesta faula, diu Fulgenci que nou Muses són dites nou consonàncies de la veu humana, e les nou Pièrides nou dissonàncies.*¹²⁰ No es cierta del todo esta afirmación, porque Fulgencio identifica a las Piérides con las Musas en el prólogo de su obra; él mismo se califica como “grosero discípulo de las Piérides” —*Fulgenti, rudis accola Pieridum*—, y se dirige en todo el prólogo a Calíope. En cambio, enseguida el texto

116. Fulgence. *Mythologies*, trad. y ed. Étienne Wolff, Philippe Dain. Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2013: 64-65. De la versión francesa reproducida por los autores: *Et si on lui attribue également un quadrigé, c'est soit parce qu'il accomplit sa révolution annuelle en la partageant en quatre saisons distinctes, soit parce qu'il divise le parcours de la journée en quatre quartiers. C'est aussi pourquoi on a donné à ses chevaux eux-mêmes des noms correspondant à ces étapes, à savoir Érytraeus, Actéon, Lampus et Philogée. Érytraeus, en grec, veut dire rouge, parce qu'il se lève tout rouge en jaillissant sur le seuil du matin; Actéon veut dire resplendissant, parce qu'au terme de la troisième heure, plein d'intensité il rayonne d'une lumière plus éclatante; quant à Lampus, c'est le flamboyant, lorsque dans sa courbe il est parvenu au point médian de la journée; Philogée, en grec, veut dire qui aime la terre, parce que, à la neuvième heure, s'inclinant d'une manière plus prononcée, il descend pur se coucher. Los editores indican que el nombre de “Philogée” n'apparaît nulle part ailleurs (“no aparece en ninguna otra parte”).*

117. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 80-81.

118. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 249-250.

119. Ovid. *Metamorphoses, in fifteen books*, ed. John Minellius. Dublin: P. Wogan, 1815: 2.

120. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 6.



del *Curial* se convierte calladamente en deudor de la *Fabula de nomen Musis* de Fulgencio. Primero afirma en él el mitógrafo que a las nueve Musas se añade al propio Apolo porque son diez los elementos que constituyen la voz humana: *Huic etiam Apollini nouem deputant Musas ipsumque decimum Musis adiciunt illa uidelicet causa, quod humanae uocis decem sint modulamina: unde et cum decacorda Apollo pingitur cithara. Sed et lex diuina decacordum dicit psalterium.*¹²¹ Y a continuación describe la emisión de la voz, y esa curiosa descripción, que debió entusiasmar al filólogo Milà, pasa tal cual al *Curial*:

*Fit ergo uox quattuor dentibus, id est e contra positis, ad quos lingua percutit et quibus si unus minus fuerit sibilum potius quam uocem reddat necesse est. Duo labia uelut cimbala uerborum commoda modulantia, lingua ut plectrum quae curuamine quodam uocalem format spiritum, palatum cuius concauitas profert sonum, gutturus fistula quae tereti meatum spiritalem praebet excursu et pulmo qui uelut aerius folliis concepta reddit ac reuocat. Habes ergo nouem Musarum uel Apollinis ipsius redditam rationem.*¹²²

*Fa's, donques, la veu, per quatre dents contraposades, les quals la lengua fêr, de les quals si alguna defall ha defalliment en la veu; dos labis, dues cathacimbales, als quals la lengua plega, e com se encorba forma un vocal spirit en la concavitat del paladar o de la boca, qui per lo camí de gola corre com per flauta; los leus o polmons, axí con manxes, envien lo vent, e despuys que és enviat lo revoquen e cobren. E aquests nou instruments són dits nou Muses, a les quals és ajustat Appolló, pero ço com deu són les veus de tota melodia, e poch valdrien los instruments si no fos instrumentador. E açò quant al cantar.*¹²³

Luego vuelve al decacordio citado antes por Fulgencio: *Axí mateix Appol-ló se pinta ab decacordi, que vol dir instrument ab deu cordes concordants o deu veu consonants, e finalmente cítara. E així saltiri és dit decacordi, quasi deu cordes consonants, segons és dit.*¹²⁴

Tras sumar una cita del Salmo 92, 4 (*Vulgata* 91, 4), regresa a Fulgencio y resume la enumeración y explicación de las nueve Musas. Así dice el texto del *Curial* de la primera: *Item les dites Muses en altra manera són all·legorizades: que la primera Musa sí's appellada Clio, que és interpretada gloriosa dea, o cogitació gloriosa de cercar o cogitar sciència; 'cleos' en grech, en latí 'fama', la qual segueix la sciència.*¹²⁵

El texto de Fulgencio aclara esa forma de alegoría:

*Nos uero nouem Musas doctrinae atque scientiae dicimus modos, hoc est: prima Clio quasi cogitatio prima discendi —cleos enim Grece fama dicitur [...] et quoniam nullus scientiam quaerit nisi in qua famae suae proleat dignitatem, ob hanc rem prima Clio appellata est, ide est cogitatio quaerendae scientiae.*¹²⁶

121. Fulgence. *Mythologies...*: 66.

122. Fulgence. *Mythologies...*: 67. La versión francesa de los editores : *L'expression vocale se fait donc par quatre dents, celles qui font face à la langue et contre lesquelles elle vient frapper; s'il s'en trouve une de moins, la langue produira inévitablement un sifflement plutôt qu'une sonorité vocale. Les deux lèvres sont comme des cymbales qui donnent une mesure à la souplesse des mots; la langue est comme un plectre et sa courbure règle le souffle de la voix: la forme concave du palais émet le son; le conduit qu'est la gorge offre, par son issue arrondie, un passage à la respiration; et les poumons, comme un soufflet rempli d'air, expirent et inspirent leur contenu. Voilà donc l'explication des neuf Muses et d'Apollon lui-même.*

123. *Curial e Güelfa...*: III, 7.

124. *Curial e Güelfa...*: III, 7.

125. *Curial e Güelfa...*: III, 8.

126. Fulgence. *Mythologies...*: 66-67. De la versión francesa de los editores : *Por nous, les neuf Muses correspondent aux degrés de l'éducation et du savoir; ainsi la première, c'est Clio, autrement dit le premier dessein de l'étude; en effet, cleos, en grec, signifie rumeur [siguen luego dos citas de Homero]; et, puisque personne ne recherche un savoir qui ne lui permette de prolonger la magnificence de sa réputation, pour cette raison, la première fut nommée Clio, c'est-a-dire le dessein de rechercher le savoir. Fulgence. *Mythologies...*: 67.*



Así sucede con las otras ocho; pero luego deja las Musas y sigue con las Piérides en la tradición ovidiana, como antes de acudir a Fulgencio había hecho: *Tantost les dites Pièrides foren per los déus convertides en piques, que en comúin lenguatge cathalà són dites garces, e són ocells garruladors, e aprenen parlar en totes lengües ço que-ls mostren, emperò no saben ni entenen ço que dien.*¹²⁷

Y la palabra “píques” la toma del canto I del “Purgatorio” de *La divina commedia*: *seguitando il mio canto con quel sòno / di cui le Piche misere sentiro / lo colpo tal, che disperar perdono.*¹²⁸ Esas “píques” —*picae* en latín—, más cerca de Piérides, son las *garces* en catalán. Solo que ahora recurre a otra explicación para la metamorfosis (narrada por Ovidio en *Metamorfosis*, V), ya que acaba de seguir el texto de Fulgencio, en donde las Musas son alegoría de los grados del saber.¹²⁹ Luego abandona al mitógrafo latino.

Poco antes, Fulgencio, en *Mitologiae* I, 8, había hablado sobre *Fabula de Fatis*, de Cloto, Laquesís y Atropos:

*Tría etiam ipso Plutoni destinant fata: quarum prima Cloto, secunda Lacesis, tertia Atropos —clitos enim Grece euocatio dicitur, Lacesis uero sors nuncupatur, Atropos quoque sine ordine dicitur; hoc uidelicet sentire uolentes quod prima sit natiuitatis euocatio, secunda uitae sors, quemadmodum quis uiuere possit, tertia mortis conditio quae sine lege uenit.*¹³⁰

Con esta explicación tal vez podamos entender la curiosa elección del duque de Baviera de los nombres de Cloto y Laquesís para dárselos a sus hijas; para nosotros siguen siendo los de las Parcas. Aunque es otro el texto que debe sumarse a este para intentar ver mejor el tejido del *Curial*, lleno de erudición y de muy diversos hilos de distintas épocas: la *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida, libros I-III*¹³¹ de Enrique de Villena,¹³² un autor muy leído por Milà i Fontanals:

Dixerón los poethas que tres fadas eran que fadavan todos los omes en sus nascimientos, a las cuales llamaron Clotho, Lachesis e Antropos; e que Clotho trae la rueca e Lachesis tirava el filo e ordía la tela e Antropos la cortava. Llamáronles Parcas, es a saber perdonaderas, por contrario, porque a alguno non perdonavan, ansí como al vinagre dizen vino dulce; e quiriendo por estas entender los tres tiempos, pasado, presente e porvenir, que traen la serie de las causas, que son los fados de los omes, segúnd ya se declaró en una otra glosa ante d'esta.

127. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 6.

128. Alighieri, Dante. “Divina Commedia”, *Tutte le opere*, ed. Italo Borzi, Giovanni Fallani, Nicola Maggi, Silvio Zennaro. Roma: Grandi Tascabili Economici/Newton Compton, 2005: 234 (líneas 10-12).

129. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 9.

130. La versión francesa de los editores: *On affecte également au même Pluton les trois Destinées: la première est Clotho, la deuxième Lachésis et la troisième Atropos —en effet, clitos, en grec, veut dire appel, Lachésis désigne le sort et Atropos veut dire sans règle; par là on veut évidemment faire comprendre que la première est l'appel à naître, la deuxième le sort de la vie, la manière dont chacun peut vivre, la troisième la réalité de la mort qui arrive sans être tenue par aucune loi. Fulgence. Mythologies...: 62-63.*

131. Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida, libros I-III. Obras completas, II*, ed. Pedro Cátedra. Madrid: Biblioteca Castro, 1994: 73.

132. Lola Badia y Jaume Torró señalan *dos errors conjuntius* (“dos errores conjuntivos”) de las *Glosas* de Villena y del *Curial* (la diosa Obsrea u Opstrea, y el linaje de Dido evocado por Camar); subrayan que *és rellevant haver pogut demostrar que l'Anònim usava unes gloses de l'Eneida que comparteixen alguns errors textuals amb les que Villena va fer servir en el seu comentari castellà y lo atribuyen a su formación en l'ambient cultural de les corts dels Trastàmara de les primeres dècades del segle XV* (“que es relevante haber podido demostrar que el Anónimo usaba unas glosas de la Eneida que comparten algunos errores textuales con las que Villena usó en su comentario castellano”; “el ambiente cultural de las cortes los Trastámara de las primeras décadas del siglo XV”). Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. “Introducció...”: 84-85. No enlaza, como creen los estudiosos, las dos obras una fuente común, sino la lectura que Milà i Fontanals había hecho de las *Glosas* de Villena. Las numerosas fuentes medievales de varias literaturas que aparecen en el texto del *Curial* no pueden explicarse más que acudiendo a la vasta formación del erudito.

*E bien dan a entender sus nombres esto que d'ellas es dicho, porque Clotho en griego quiere dezir "vocación", mostrando la entrada de la vida. E Lachesis en griego quiere dezir "suerte", que es la suerte de la vida, siquiere la duración de aquélla. Antropos en griego quiere dezir "sin orden", por la condición de la muerte, que non viene a çierto tiempo.*¹³³

E insiste más adelante, en la glosa del libro II, al hablar de la muerte de Príamo:

*... que fue por terminación de los fados, es a saber por acarreo de las costillaciones celestiales, que causan aquellas tres partes del tiempo, es a saber principiante, mediante e finiente, a quien dixeron los poetas fadas, que fadavan los ombres, nombradas por ellos Clotho, Lachesis e Antropos.*¹³⁴

Precisamente en el *Curial* aparece Antropos y no con su forma habitual de Atropos; así le dice al héroe Melchior de Pando: *—Curial, aquesta doncella pot haver nom Laquesis, mas ella és Àntropos, certament, e axí ho provarets per temps.*¹³⁵ Y la Fortuna le dice en sueños a la Güelfa: *e sinó tement que Àntropos lo'm tragués d'entre mans.*¹³⁶ Así también puede reconocerse la expresión de Curial al hablar con Calíope: *O, egrègia senyora! ¿E quals fades me fadaren que yo tanta honor reebés, que nou germanes, filles del major del déus mortals, vengessen a mi e visitassen aquest sepulcre de ignorància?*¹³⁷ O la presencia de la madre de Venus, Dionio,¹³⁸ Dione en el *Curial*;¹³⁹ la de los "leedores" tan presentes en sus glosas virgilianas, ("legidor")¹⁴⁰ o la cita continua de la *Troyana historia* de Guido de Columnis, de la *Historia Fiorita* de Armannino, o de los aplaudidos Dictis y Dares, o incluso del sorprendente "guay!" del Curial: *¡Guay de mí, que yo acá no venia per consell!*¹⁴¹ *¡E, guay, que non es de fiar en los dioses cuando son forçados!*¹⁴² O la no menos asombrosa *desusada* mà que Curial *alargà al plat* para comer,¹⁴³ porque Villena usa la expresión en la carta al rey de Navarra, a quien le ofrece su obra: *por cuya contemplación e mandado se atrevió mi desusada mano tractar la péñola escriviente la virgiliana doctrina en la Eneida contenida.*¹⁴⁴

Tras sus siete años de cautiverio en África, Curial, después de haber recuperado la gracia de su dama, y rico por el tesoro del padre de Camar, va a vivir en Francia una época entregado a los placeres: *se donà a viure mollament e laciva, como si fos arquebisbe o gran prelat, no recordant-se ésser cavaller ne home de sciència*¹⁴⁵ y puede advertirse la sonrisa del escritor en esa referencia satírica a los altos cargos de la Iglesia. Entregado a los vicios (goloso y lascivo), no es raro que una noche en sueños tenga una visión y se le aparezca Baco, que no es precisamente *déu de sciència*, como dice el narra-

133. Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida*....: 73.

134. Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida*....: 486.

135. *Curial e Güelfa*....: I, 109.

136. *Curial e Güelfa*....: III, 223.

137. *Curial e Güelfa*....: III, 78.

138. Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida*....: 614.

139. *Curial e Güelfa*....: III, 58 y siguientes.

140. *Curial e Güelfa*....: II, 247.

141. *Curial e Güelfa*....: III, 70.

142. Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida*....: 414.

143. *Curial e Güelfa*....: I, 99.

144. Villena, Enrique de. *Traducción y glosas de la Eneida*....: 5.

145. *Curial e Güelfa*....: III, 173.



dor; pero sí tendrá una “visión deleitable” porque se le van a aparecer las siete artes liberales, que responden a los rasgos que el bachiller Alfonso de la Torre dio a su obra.

Como dice este autor, “la lumbré intellectual, la qual es llamada visión”,¹⁴⁶ y en ella verá Curial junto al dios a siete reinas; en *La visión deleitable* serán siete doncellas. La primera tiene en la mano derecha un título escrito de letras latinas, las quales dezían en esta manera: ‘Vox litterata et articulata debito modo pronunciata’. E en la siniestra mano tenía una palmatoria con açotes, se le acercará un niño “muy gracioso”, como que veniese fuyendo al abrigo de su madre e se acogió a la donzella. El qual niño avía nombre entendimiento; ella le dirá:

*El mi ofiço es tratar de la disciplina et artefijio de las letras; conviene a saber de las letras latinas et de las partes de la oraçion, de las sílabas, de los pies, de los açotes, de la ortographía, de la ethimología, de la diasintástica, del barbarismo, del soliçismo et de los otros viçios del metaplasmo, del tema, del tiempo, de la fábula, de la prosa, de la ystoria.*¹⁴⁷

En el *Curial* la visión de las siete artes será muchísimo más breve, carecerá de profundidad alegórica y, sobre todo, vendrá envuelta en la ironía que caracteriza a todo el relato. No hay más que ver cómo aparece la primera reina, la Gramática, rodeada de niños (y no hablando con un gracioso niño, que es el Entendimiento):

*Estaven davant aquell déu, a la part emperò esquerra, una reyna, ab aquella cara jove e fadrina e una corona al cap no molt preciosa, circuyda de infinits minyons, qui uns legien, altres ploraven; e tenia la dita reyna en la man dreta unes correjades, e en la squerra un cantell de pa. Stàvan davant aquesta quatre donzelles molt belles, les quals los seus noms propis tenien brodat als pits, e per aquelles letres Curial sabé lo nom de cada una d’elles, ço és: Ortografia, Ethimologia, Diassintástica e Prosídia.*¹⁴⁸

Ese *cantell de pa* que tiene en la mano izquierda nos lleva a otro texto: al *Libre de Fortuna e Prudència* de Bernat Metge, al viejo que le engañará y hará que suba a la barca, en *l’una ma tench un anap / en l’altra un cantell de pa*.¹⁴⁹ Los niños que leen tienen ese premio, y los que lloran sufren les *correjades*.

La siguiente reina —“la señora de aquella tierra”, en *La visión*— es la Lógica; “en la mano derecha tenía un manípulo de flores et un título en letras griegas que dezían *verum et falsum*. En la siniestra tenía un muy ponçoñoso escurpión”.¹⁵⁰ En la visión de Curial, la reina *no podía estar segura; e tenia dues serps, ó és, una en cascuna mà, les quals contínuament se volien mordre*; y delante de ella estaban tres doncellas, cuyos nombres llevaban bordados en el pecho: *Probabilis, Demonstrativa e Sophística*.¹⁵¹ En *La visión deleitable* la Lógica enseñará al Entendimiento la argumentación silogística. Habrá más coincidencias en la tercera reina o donzella, la Retórica:

146. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*. Tolosa: Juan Parix y Esteban Clebat, 1489: f. 6v (reproducción facsímil, Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1983). La obra se publica en 1484 en traducción catalana, y en 1485 en castellano.

147. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: ff. 4-5v.

148. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 174.

149. Metge, Bernat. *Obras*, ed. Martí de Riquer. Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, 1959: 28.

150. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: ff. 7v-8.

151. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 175.

Era infinitamente muy más aparente así en el gesto de la cara e façiones et proporciones de la propria persona como en el sumpto ert preçio de las vestiduras a primera faz [...]. A las vezes fazia un gesto en tanto exçeso de alegría [...]. En la mano diestra tenía un añafl. En la siniestra tenía un libro cerrado.

Verá el Entendimiento pintados en la sala “los tres géneros de las causas: deliberativo, demostrativo, judicial”.¹⁵²

La tercera reina que ve Curial en su visión iba *de vâries colors vestida, emperò molt ricamente avillada; e estava tan alegre cantant, que açò era una gran maravella*. Las tres doncellas que tenía ante sí eren apelladas *Judicialis, Demonstrativa, Deliberativa*.¹⁵³

La cuarta tenía una *taula blanca davant si*, y las dos doncellas que la sirven *havien nom Par, Dispar*. Y sin la guía de *La visión deleitable* no es fácil la interpretación de esta cuarta figura: es la “Arimética”, que “en la mano diestra tenía un grifo de fierro; en la siniestra una tabla emblanquida. E en somo de las vestiduras tenía unas letras griegas, en las quales decía: Par e impar”.¹⁵⁴ Y la leyenda “Par e impar” puede verse en la ilustración de la edición tolosana que manejo.

La siguiente doncella será la “Geometría”; y mientras en *La visión deleitable* cada una de ellas está más cerca de la cima del monte, en la visión de *Curial* las reinas lo están del dios Baco. Si en esta la reina *tenia un livell en la una mà, e en l'altra un compàs*, y las tres doncellas que la acompañan se llaman *Altimetria, Planimetria, Subeumetria*;¹⁵⁵ en *La visión deleitable*, en la mano derecha tenía un *cordel delgado con una peça del plomo; en la siniestra un compàs muy concertado*. La doncella contará al Entendimiento cómo *el antiquíssimo Tales avía fallado el artificio de medir en lo alto e llano e profundo*.¹⁵⁶

En la visión de *Curial*, la siguiente “reina” es la Música, pero, como en los otros casos, no menciona su nombre, que sí está, como es lógico en *La visión deleitable*, porque la alegoría parte del concepto que cobra forma en las figuras, personificado: son doncellas presentes en las ilustraciones de la obra; en el *Curial* tiene que deducirse quiénes son en cada caso. Dice el narrador de ella: *Sonava uns òrguens e cantava ab tanta dolçor de melodia*, que se corresponde con el pasaje de Alfonso de la Torre: *E la çélica donzella tenía en la mano una viuela et en la otra mano unos órganos manuales*, y verá el Entendimiento pintados en la superficie de la pared “las tres partes de la música; conviene a saber: la armónica, la orgánica, la métrica”,¹⁵⁷ que en el *Curial* corresponden a los nombres de las tres doncellas que acompañan a esta reina: *Organico flatu, Armonica voce, Ritmica pulsu* (con la precisión de un escritor que sabe música, como Milà).

Y llegamos a la séptima y última reina, la más cercana a Baco: *tenia una spera en la mà e un quadrant als pits*.¹⁵⁸ Es, como dice, *La visión deleitable*, la “Astrología”, que está ya en la cima del monte y es la que puede abrir la puerta de la habitación, donde mora la Verdad. Lo que en el *Curial* dice que *havia la vista tan àgil que penetrava e traspassava los cels*, se corresponde en *La visión* con “que ella avía visto en su agudeza de ojos”. Y su oficio era *considerar la altura et el movimiento et la quantidad de los çielos et estrellas*;¹⁵⁹ pero su exposición es mucho más breve porque deja paso a los parlamentos

152. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: ff. 11-13.

153. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 175.

154. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: f. 14.

155. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 176.

156. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: f. 15v.

157. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: f. 16-16v.

158. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 176.

159. Torre, Alfonso de la. *Visión deleitable*...: ff.17-17v.



de la Verdad y las otras virtudes. En el texto del *Curial*, se mantiene la forma de este apartado y se cierra con dos doncellas llamadas *Motus*, *Effectus*.

El cierre de la enumeración lo forman los personajes que están sentados al pie de la primera reina: *Priscian*, *Uguici*, *Pàpias*, *Catholicon*, *Ysidoro*, *Alexandre e molts altres*; y tanto Prisciano como “Alixandre de Viladei” —y así se deshace el posible equívoco del nombre Alexandre— y antes Oguicio están también nombrados en *La visión deleitable* como “inventores” de las distintas ciencias. Y la ironía no deja de estar presente de nuevo en el *Curial* porque antes de enumerarlos, dice el narrador: *Detràs d’aquell déu havia tanta gent e de tan diverses partides e de tan stranyes terres, que si no fos que tots parlaven llatí, nulls temps se fóran entesos*.¹⁶⁰ Tal afirmación tiene sentido en las *Relaciones de la vida de Marcos de Obregón*, precisamente en la ciudad de Milán, porque son personas las que utilizan el latín como lengua franca, pero no en una visión alegórica: “Hallamos allí que habían pasado en otro barco algunas gentes de diversas naciones: franceses, alemanes, italianos y españoles. Y para entendernos, hablamos todos en latín”.¹⁶¹

Hay que sumar a estas lecturas que dejan huella en el texto del *Curial* las “Coplas” a la muerte de su padre de Jorge Manrique (posteriores, por tanto, a noviembre de 1476); y es precisamente la referida a los infantes de Aragón, la XVI, muy oportunamente recordada por lo Sanglier, ya franciscano, en el sermón que le dirige a Curial:¹⁶²

*E prech-te que-m digues: ¿què és ço que-t ha sobrat de la multitut de viandes precioses que has menjades, de les dances, de les juntes e dels torneigs que has fets? ¿On són les festes en les quals te est trobat? Mostra-les-me, frare meu. ¿On és lo dia de ir? Mostra-l-me. ¿On és la glòria dels preciosos ornaments? ¿No sabs totes les coses haver fi?*¹⁶³

La cita es de la copla que comienza: “¿Qué se hizo el rey don Juan? / Los infantes de Aragón, / ¿qué se hicieron? / ¿Qué fue de tanto galán? / ¿Qué fue de tanta invención / como trajieron?”;¹⁶⁴ siguen luego los recordados: “Las justas y los torneos, / paramentos, bordaduras / y cimeras / ¿fueron sino devaneos?”.¹⁶⁵

Y un poco más adelante, se le aplica a Aquiles lo que Manrique dice de su padre don Rodrigo y se populariza: “Amigo de sus amigos [...] / ¡Qué enemigo de enemigos!”,¹⁶⁶ aunque *amico amicus* tenga una tradición muy anterior como indica la glosa de Erasmo en sus *Adagia*.¹⁶⁷ En el *Curial* se dice del héroe griego: *amich de son amich e enemich de son enemich*;¹⁶⁸ y el danzar (*les dances*) está en la copla siguiente: *¿Qué se hizo aquel danzar*,¹⁶⁹ lo mismo que la referencia al ayer ido (*on és lo dia de*

160. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 177.

161. Espinel, Vicente. *Relaciones de la vida del escudero Marcos de Obregón*. Novela picaresca, ed. Rosa Navarro. Madrid: Biblioteca Castro, 2008: IV, 249.

162. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 39.

163. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 39.

164. Manrique, Jorge. *Poesía*, ed. Vicente Beltrán. Barcelona: Crítica, 1993: 158-159 (versos 181-186).

165. Manrique, Jorge. *Poesía*...: 158-159.

166. Manrique, Jorge. *Poesía*...: 118 (líneas 301, 304).

167. Erasmus. *Adages IlI to Iv100*, ed. y trad. Margaret Mann Phillips. Toronto-Buffalo-Londres: University of Toronto Press, 1982: 250 (I, iii, 17) (*Collected Works of Erasmus*: 31).

168. *Curial e Güelfa*...: III, 83-84.

169. Manrique, Jorge. *Poesía*...: 112 (líneas 202).

ir?) estaba en la anterior: “vengamos a lo de ayer, / que tan bien es olvidado / como aquello”.¹⁷⁰ La mención a la comida en el *Curial* en tal contexto es fruto de la constante ironía que caracteriza a la obra, porque es evidente que en sí es efímera y no puede aplicársele, por tanto, el *ubi sunt*.

10. Conclusiones

Curial e Güelfa no es una novela de caballerías escrita en el XV, y lo pone de manifiesto tanto la ironía con que el lector se tropieza gozosamente a cada paso, como la misma composición estructurada de la obra; basta ver que, al empezar el tercer libro, el narrador dice de él: *lo qual és algun poquet pus intricat que ls altres primers*,¹⁷¹ mostrando el conocimiento no solo de la obra en conjunto, sino de la condición que tiene para el lector la materia a exponer. Pero hay un tercer elemento que retrata perfectamente a su autor: es un erudito que ha leído desde la *Crònica* de Muntaner al *Novellino*, *Paris e Viana* y *Petit Jehan de Saintré*; que conoce a los trovadores: a Rigaut de Berbezilh, cuya canción cita, pero también a Raimbaut de Vaqueiras. Que ha leído las *Mitologiae* de Fulgencio, las *Glosas de la Eneida* de Enrique de Villena, la *Visión deleitable* de Alfonso de la Torre, las *Coplas* de Manrique y *El cortesano* de Luis Milán. Son las concordancias con tales —y otras obras— las que evidencian la imitación compuesta que lleva a cabo un escritor... del siglo XIX que ha leído las obras más destacadas de las literaturas románicas (porque imita además a Dante, a Petrarca y a Boccaccio, como otros estudiosos han mostrado).¹⁷²

Las citas, a veces textuales que de alguna de estas obras hace, los guiños a muy diversas creaciones literarias (también lo hace a obras castellanas de la Edad de Oro), sin que falten las dedicadas a algunas novelas góticas de Walter Scott, indican sin lugar a dudas que el autor del *Curial e Güelfa* es su descubridor: Manuel Milà i Fontanals. Y, por tanto, esa creación erudita es, como él dijo, *mélange de gothique et de renaissance*: novela gótica en su tiempo (no se han llamado nunca “góticas” a las novelas del XV), y obra genial de un creador de la *Renaixença* catalana. Solo un gran erudito como él pudo escribir una novela con esa exhibición de lecturas, como fruto de una elaboradísima imitación compuesta. Y tal vez un general napoleónico, que sitió a Barcelona con la quinta división de las tropas de los Cien Mil Hijos de San Luis, le sugirió el nombre de su protagonista, Curial —Cortesano—, que tan bien cuadraba a su creación, porque era además un nuevo guiño a esa original obra literaria renacentista del escritor valenciano de su mismo apellido: *El cortesano* de Luis Milán, donde se mezclaban lenguas y géneros.

Ningún escritor del siglo XV pudo tener a su alcance todos los textos medievales que afloran en él y cuya presencia he puesto de manifiesto con mi análisis, porque solo la imprenta permitió la divulgación y, por tanto, la lectura de obras italianas, provenzales, francesas, castellanas y catalanas escritas en la Edad Media. E indudablemente la presencia en el texto del *Curial* de obras posteriores a la fecha asignada al relato hacen imposible seguir manteniendo la ficción de que es una obra escrita en el siglo XV. *Curial e Güelfa* es la creación de un gran erudito, del mejor romanista peninsular del siglo XIX: Manuel Milà i Fontanals.

170. Manrique, Jorge. *Poesía...*: 175 (líneas 178-180).

171. *Curial e Güelfa...*: III, 13.

172. Badia, Lola; Torró, Jaume. “Introducció...”: 59-98.



LA HISTÒRIA MEDIEVAL A LES INSTITUCIONS DE RECERCA CATALANES (2003-2009)

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RESUM

Entre 2003 i 2009 a Catalunya els investigadors en història medieval aconseguiren 3.393.3339,77€ en projectes de recerca i publicaren 1.249 treballs de recerca, dels quals sols el 11,04% eren escrits en una llengua que no fos el català o el castellà, malgrat que la majoria d'ells gaudeix d'un adient nivell d'internacionalització i que participen de les principals línies d'innovació en recerca. Els investigadors han de compatibilitzar la seva activitat amb la docència i la gestió dels seus centres. L'administració crea els llocs de treball en funció de les necessitats docents i no pas de la recerca i avança cap a figures contractuals temporals.¹

El present article analitza una munió de dades —bibliomètriques, pressupostàries i de divers ordre— a fi d'analitzar la producció científica efectuada a Catalunya sobre l'edat mitjana en el període 2003 a 2009, i n'extreu unes conclusions que pretenen ser objectives, entorn a l'impacte i la significació de la recerca en l'àmbit de la història medieval.² Pròpiament, el treball és la versió extensa i completa d'un informe sol·licitat el 2012 per l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans, en el marc de la seva preocupació, compartida amb l'Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca, per efectuar un seguiment crític del curs de la recerca a Catalunya. Per això una versió breu està inserta en el report de recerca sobre Història,³ el qual guanya en significació en poder comparar les dades amb els anteriors períodes estudiats en altres informes previs des de l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans: 1990-1995⁴ i 1996-2001.⁵

D'acord amb els treballs precedents, la recerca efectuada en el present estudi es centra en les universitats públiques. Més que per raons formals, s'ha mantingut aquesta perspectiva perquè les

1. Abreviatures emprades: BP, Programa Beatriu de Pinos; CSIC, Consejo superior de Investigaciones Científicas. Institució Milà i Fontanals; CU, Catedràtic d'Universitat; JdC, Progrma Juan de la Cierva; RyC, Programa Ramon y Cajal; TEU, Titular d'Escola Universitària; TU, Titular d'Universitat; UAB, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; UB, Universitat de Barcelona; UdG, Universitat de Girona; UdL, Universitat de Lleida; UPF, Universitat Pompeu Fabra; URV, Universitat Rovira i Virgili.

2. L'article adopta com a base d'estudi la volumetria obtinguda després d'acumular una munió de dades i comptabilitzar-les amb absoluta precisió numèrica. Per això cal agrair tant la generosa aportació de dades per part dels companys d'àrea, cosa que ha permès una detallada concreció percentual, com, alhora, l'ambient de reflexió propiciat pels col·legues brasilers que ha facilitat la redacció d'aquestes ratlles des d'una volguda llunyania aconseguida a les Universidade Federal do Paraná i Universidade Federal do Mato Grosso, durant la primavera de 2012.

3. Sabaté, Flocel. "Història Medieval". *Reports de la recerca a Catalunya.2003-2009. Història*, Antoni Simon, ed. Octubre 2014, Institut d'Estudis Catalans. 2 novembre 2014 <http://www.iec.cat/reports/reports3/Historia0309_definitiu.pdf>: 37-73.

4. Balcells, Albert, ed. *Reports de la recerca a Catalunya. Història*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 1998.

5. Balcells, Albert, ed. *Reports de la recerca a Catalunya. 1996-2002. Història*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 2005.



universitats privades que han anat sorgit a Catalunya (Universitat Abat Oliba CEU, Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, Universitat Ramon Llull), tot i incorporar en la seva oferta docent estudis propers com els d'Humanitats, no han desenvolupat àrees de recerca sobre Història Medieval i no han centrat en aquesta àrea de recerca les dinàmiques de captació i gestió de recursos que comporta actualment la investigació reglada.

La investigació sobre el període medieval a Catalunya ja ha estat indagada amb rigor en diverses ocasions, amb una certa cadència al llarg del darrer quart del segle XX que s'ha perllongat en el segle XXI, cosa que no deixa de denotar un afany per la reflexió i la crítica.⁶ Dins d'aquesta dinàmica, durant el septenni 2002-2009 la recerca en història medieval a Catalunya ha palesat una elevada activitat, prou reflectida en el volum de publicacions. Això enllaça amb aspectes positius, com la captació de recursos, però també amb altres més dubtosos, com el grau d'internacionalització real. En tots els casos destaquen els reptes fornits per l'estructura institucional de recerca i la permanent exigència d'adaptació dels investigadors als nous marcs formals

1. Infraestructures, recursos humans i econòmics

La recerca requereix d'unes bases que no poden ser obviades sinó que requereixen un detallat anàlisi precisament per valorar quina capacitat real existeix a partir dels centres, el gruix d'investigadors i el finançament.

1.1 Universitats i CSIC

Els investigadors en Història Medieval a Catalunya, en el període a considerar, estaven dispersats en set centres de recerca, de dimensions ben diverses. En cap d'ells articulen unitats administratives i organitzatives pròpies, tractant en tots els casos d'assolir una coherència conceptual, força definida en dos centres: la Institució Milà i Fontanals, del CSIC, i la UB. En el primer els medievalistes comparteixen el Departament d'Estudis Medievals amb altres àrees que també estudien l'edat mitjana, aparellament actualment concretat amb una investigadora de filologia. En el segon, que aplega quasi una tercera part de tots els medievalistes de Catalunya, aquests constitueixen el Departament d'Història Medieval i Paleografia i Diplomàtica juntament amb els professors i investigadors de l'àrea de Ciències i Tècniques Historiogràfiques. A la UAB els medievalistes segueixen aquest mateix esquema, afegint-hi a més les diverses àrees que es puguin encabir dins de les "Ciències de l'Antiguetat", mentre que, en nombres molt més reduïts, a la UdL s'inclouen dins d'un departament d'Història, a la URV en un d'Història i d'Història de l'Art, a la UdG en un de Geografia, Història i Història d'Art i a la UPF en un genèric d'Humanitats i Ciències Socials.

La conseqüència immediata és que l'articulació en departaments universitaris no té gaire incidència en el quefer investigador. Els investigadors, seguint les respectives línies de recerca, han

6. Deixant de banda reflexions sectorials, el conjunt de l'aportació en l'àrea d'història Medieval ha estat objecte d'anàlisis com els següents: Batlle, Carme; Ferrer, Maria Teresa. "Balance de les activitats historiogràfiques referents a l'edat mitjana a la postguerra franquista". *Cuadernos de Historia Económica de Cataluña*, 19 (1978): 321-330; Salrach, Josep Maria. "Balance crítico y perspectivas de la producción historiográfica sobre historia medieval catalano-balear en la década 1978-1986". *Studia Historica. Historia Medieval*, 6 (1988): 95-139; Salrach, Josep Maria. "Noves recerques i interpretacions sobre la història medieval general i de Catalunya en particular". *Balma. Didàctica de les ciències socials, geografia i història*, 2 (1995): 83-95; Riera, Antoni. "La Historia Medieval en Cataluña (1990-1995). Un balance breve de las últimas investigaciones". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 27/1 (1997): 501-567; Salrach, Josep Maria. "La història de Catalunya, avui. La llarga edat mitjana". *Butlletí de la Societat Catalana d'Estudis Històrics*, 25 (2014): 261-297.



creat les pròpies sinergies a partir de les activitats i dels projectes de recerca i de la consolidació dels grups de recerca. Ben significativament, en cap departament tots els professors han compartit unes mateixes unitats d'investigació. Aquest biaix ha evidenciat la cerca, per part dels mateixos investigadors, de fórmules transversals que permetin tant entrelligar investigadors de diferents centres com apropar aquells ubicats en altres departaments de les mateixes universitats i que es dediquen a la recerca del mateix període medieval des d'altres disciplines. Per aquí s'ha arribat a establitzar articulacions de major incidència en la recerca, com s'esdevé amb el desenvolupament del grup reconegut per la UdL el 2001 i establitzat el 2005 com a "Grup de Recerca Consolidat en Estudis Medievals Espai Poder i Cultura", destinat a aplegar investigadors que treballen en temàtiques afins des de diferents àrees (història, història de l'art, filologies) en la recerca medieval a la UdL i a la URV; i, encara més, quan sota la mateixa fórmula, el 2008, la UB crea, com a centre de recerca propi, l'Institut de Recerca en Cultures Medievals.

1.2 Altres centres de recerca

Ultra els centres de recerca esmentats, cal considerar la funció de l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans, definit jurídicament per la seva funció acadèmica i científica a Catalunya. Sense investigadors propis, però constituït per membres d'altres centres, promou i finança programes de recerca, publicacions i altres accions en foment de la investigació en àmbits entre els que s'inclou, en el període estudiat, la història medieval.

Tema diferent és la tasca realitzada pels diversos centres locals i comarcals, de gran tradició en el teixit social català, amb una llarga trajectòria en l'aportació de novetats en història medieval i, en molts casos, sostenidors de publicacions i sobretot de revistes comarcals fornidores de destacades aportacions en història medieval. La formació universitària de molts dels seus impulsors (en general professionals de l'ensenyament, gestors culturals o responsables de centres com ara arxius, biblioteques, museus, etc...) ha incrementat la qualitat d'unes aportacions que, alhora, contribueixen poderosament a un coneixement territorialment equilibrat del que fou l'edat mitjana a Catalunya, com es demostra en les nombroses publicacions efectuades durant el període estudiat. Tanmateix, no poden ser considerats centres de recerca, perquè aquesta consideració no es deu sols a l'aportació de coneixement nou sinó a la participació en un sistema reglat internacional en l'elaboració científica. Per això són de valorar molt positivament iniciatives que enllacen aquest treball comarcal i local amb l'àmbit universitària, com ha propiciat, en el període estudiat, la Coordinadora de Centres d'Estudis de Parla Catalana, mitjançant trobades científiques i altres activitats.

1.3 Personal docent i investigador

Durant el període estudiat es percep una gran estabilitat en els cossos funcionals dedicats a la recerca. En aquests nivells, tan sols hi ha hagut una creació d'una plaça nova, el 2005, de Científic Titular al CSIC. En els altres casos els canvis han estat deguts a promocions personals sense repercussió en l'increment dels membres dels cossos d'investigadors. En les figures superiors de caire funcional —catedràtics d'universitat (CU) i professors titulars (TU)— la UB el 2003 augmenta el nombre de catedràtics de dos a tres; a la URV el 2008 es passa de 3 TU i 1 CU a 2 TU i 2 CU, i, el 2009, a la UdL es passa de 1 CU i 2 TU a 2 CU i 1 TU, alhora que el 2003 a la UPF la plaça de TU desapareix quan el seu titular passa a CU. Així mateix, al CSIC el 2003 hi ha el pas d'un científic

titular a un investigador científic i el 2009 d'investigador científic a professor d'investigació. A la UdG no hi ha hagut canvis en aquest període, entorn a una plantilla de dos TU. S'evidencia arreu la voluntat de restringir l'accés a aquests cossos: només una promoció personal a la UB ha donat pas d'una titularitat interina d'Escola Universitària a una TU el 2003, mentre que en dates posteriors s'han cercat les estabilitzacions mitjançant les fórmules contractuals permanents pròpies del sistema català. Alguns interinatges no han consolidat la posició, com s'esdevé el 2003 a UB quan un anterior ocupant d'una plaça de titular interí troba continuïtat provisional com associat.

Les figures contractuals han conduït la consolidació de les places d'investigadors: 2 a la UB (amb l'estabilització de dos agregats, un procedent de la figura d'ajudant LRU, i un altre que ha passat pel lectorat tot provenint d'una plaça d'associat); 2 a la UAB (provinents d'associats, amb un que progressivament passa a lector el 2005 i a lector el 2009, i un altre que assoleix el lectorat el 2009) i 1 a la UPF, que el 2006 passa d'ajudant a lector. D'aquesta manera, la graduació contractual via lectorat i, com a categoria superior a aquesta, l'agregaduria s'evidencia com la figura preferent en la consolidació d'investigadors en l'etapa analitzada.

L'activitat investigadora ha permès incrementar les places d'investigació mitjançant els programes tant del corresponent Ministeri espanyol com del Govern autonòmic de Catalunya destinats a contractacions temporals d'investigació. Això va permetre que entre 2003 i 2004 la UB gaudís d'una plaça d'investigador postdoctoral; que el 2007 s'incorporés un investigador contractat provinent del programa Beatriu de Pinós a la UdL; que el 2008 el CSIC guanyés un altre provinent del programa Juan de la Cierva, i la UdL un altre de nivell superior provinent del programa Ramon y Cajal; i que el 2009 el CSIC afegís un investigador també procedent del programa Ramon y Cajal, a més d'una investigadora postdoctoral mitjançant el propi programa *JADE*. Aquestes figures no sols injecten vitalitat sinó que han facilitat la captació de capital humà que investigava fora del sistema català: els quatre investigadors que han ocupat les places més destacades (1 Beatriu de Pinós, 1 Juan de la Cierva i 2 Ramon y Cajal) procedien de centres de recerca de fora de Catalunya, tres d'ells a l'estranger. El revers d'aquesta captació de recursos és la seva manca de perspectives de futur. En cap cas la finalització del contracte ha comportat la continuïtat en nous investigadors sota la mateixa figura i, fins i tot, tampoc no s'han ofert vies per a la prolongació de la carrera investigadora en els afectats: la finalització, durant el període estudiat, de les esmentades places de postdoctoral, Beatriu de Pinós i Juan de la Cierva ha conduït a què l'ocupant de la primera continués la carrera investigadora fora del sistema català i els altres dos no trobessin cap altre sortida que restar al marge del món de la recerca.

Més puntualment, les obligacions de gestió o d'especialització en la recerca que acompanyen als investigadors consolidats han permès crear ocasionals llocs docents que, en realitat, no han avançat vers places de recerca sinó que s'han extingit, com en els associats de la UdL entre 2008 i 2009 i l'increment, el 2009, d'un associat a la UdG i un altre a la UPF. Aquestes places s'afegeixen, en realitat, a les d'associats de què han gaudit en l'àmbit medieval destacadament la UB i la UAB. Es tracta de places creades en funció de les exigències docents i no pas de les necessitats investigadores, cosa que en sol justificar la seva escassa dotació econòmica. Tanmateix, estan ocupades per personal que investiga i que evidencia, amb aquesta tasca, la voluntat de contribuir a la carrera investigadora. En tots els casos la mobilitat i inestabilitat d'aquestes places reflecteix una precarietat que contradiu l'estabilitat necessària per a una bona tasca investigadora. Durant el període estudiat hi ha hagut, en el conjunt de les universitats catalanes, 23 professors associats en el àmbit d'història medieval, dels quals, un 26,08% en manté en aquesta situació i un 30,48% ha acabat



fora del sistema de recerca. Entremig, un 21,74% ha perllongat la seva carrera mitjançant diverses fórmules precàries en el propi centre o en un altre, un 4,33% s'ha consolidat fora de Catalunya, un altre 4,33% ho ha aconseguit dins de Catalunya però en una àrea de recerca diferent i només un 13,04% ha passat, en el propi centre i àmbit de recerca, d'associat a places superiors en el marc universitari actual, en tots els casos mitjançant les figures de lector o agregat. La pretensió que la figura d'associat permeti compatibilitzar les tasques universitàries amb altres dedicacions professionals properes, sols es constata en 10 dels 23 associats, els quals s'ocupen en activitats afins (centres universitaris privats, tasques tècniques en la pròpia universitat, arxius, arqueologia, gestió política-social) i majoritàriament —la meitat, és a dir, 5 d'ells— en ensenyament secundari. No deixa de ser una fórmula enganyosa: gairebé totes aquestes activitats comporten exigències d'alta dedicació en activitats alienes a la recerca universitària, raó per la que la majoria dels implicats no viuen la dualitat com una complementarietat de tasques i, alhora, desitjarien que la posició d'associat no fos un mer complement sinó una etapa prèvia a una consolidació universitària.

L'impuls investigador, alhora, s'ha reflectit en el manteniment de xifres ben elevades de becaris en cinc centres: UdL, UB, CSIC, UAB i UdG, que han gaudit, respectivament, de 13, 12, 6, 4 i 3 becaris, és a dir, un conjunt de 38 investigadors novells amb dotació per a la seva formació doctoral en història medieval. Tanmateix, la dificultat en la posterior consolidació d'aquests joves investigadors es pot constatar en la seva desaparició del sistema universitari català: dels 25 investigadors que han conclòs el seu període contractual en aquest període, només 9 (6 provinents de la UB, 2 de la UdL i 1 de la UAB) han prosseguit la carrera investigadora en l'àmbit de la història medieval durant el període analitzat.

El suport tecnicocientífic a la recerca s'assoleix amb les figures dels tècnics de recolzament a la recerca existents, a la UB i al CSIC, en el primer cas amb una professora associada que, durant el període estudiat, compatibilitza aquesta condició i al CSIC en comptar amb una plaça específica breument, entre 2005 i 2006.

Les plantilles, en definitiva, no estan pensades en funció de la investigació ni d'estructures de recerca. Les modificacions responen més a legítims drets de promoció personal que no pas a dissenys curriculars de la recerca. Alhora, l'evolució de la plantilla en el període estudiat en els centres universitaris evidencia la tendència a limitar el nombre de docents i d'investigadors, estancar les formes funcionaries, prevaler les figures contractuals i limitar el creixement de les dotacions investigadores. Això comporta, entre altres, un envelliment constant de la plantilla investigadora, tot i la marcada diferència entre els centres de l'entorn de Barcelona i els altres tres centres —la UdG, la UdL i la URV—, de ratio més jove. Sols al CSIC la consolidació d'una plaça d'investigació durant aquest període facilita un estancament en el progressiu envelliment, el qual en realitat serà posat a prova quan, en el septenni immediatament posterior, calgui cobrir un major nombre de baixes per jubilació.

Una altra evidència és que el nombre d'investigadors i la seva dedicació es regeixen per necessitats docents, en tots els centres llevat del CSIC. En aquest sentit, es percep un increment en l'exigència de dedicació docent. L'evolució de la docència en el mateix període ha entrat en uns nous dissenys curriculars de major exigència en la dedicació a tot el procés discent i, a més, de major distanciament entre els continguts de la docència i de la investigació. Uns continguts més generalistes han disminuït la presència d'ensenyaments especialitzats amb què atreure i assentar les bases de futurs medievalistes. La situació mena, en l'investigador i docent, a una veritable dualitat de tasques i la docència es vista no pas com un complement, sinó com una exigència de

diffícil compatibilització amb la tasca investigadora. Per compensar les elevades càrregues docents només el centre de majors dimensions, la UB, ha pogut facilitar amb una periodicitat gairebé anual un any sabàtic a un dels seus professors consolidats (CU, TU i agregats), mentre que en els altres centres sols s'ha pogut fer en un cas a UdG en el curs 2009-10. Alhora, a l'interior de cada centre, la distribució és desigual, sense una relació directa entre menor càrrega docent i major aportació científica, malgrat que a totes les universitats s'han assumit sistemes d'avaluació interna tendents a encertar un sistema compensatori en l'activitat dels investigadors i docents.

Encara cal afegir que, en tots els centres d'investigació, els seus membres han d'assumir tasques de gestió, siguin de caire investigador o docent. L'anàlisi comparatiu per centres denota una càrrega en general superior en universitats petites, on cal distribuir les tasques entre un conjunt menor de docents.

El coetani increment de l'exigència en les formes i avaluació de la recerca accentua les contradiccions entre aquesta triple responsabilitat professional: recerca, docència, gestió. Tanmateix, la tasca de recerca efectuada pels medievalistes catalans ha estat majoritàriament reconeguda de forma exitosa, a tenor dels reconeixements. el 62,5 % dels investigadors han assolit positivament els trams de recerca atorgats per l'autoritat pertinent (*Comisión Nacional Evaluadora de la Actividad Investigadora* —CNEAI— en el cas de TU i CU, i Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya —AQU— en cas de lectors i d'agregats), cosa que no sols implica efectuar un bon nivell de recerca sinó de saber orientar adientment la seva divulgació científica, d'acord amb el patrons de qualitat exigits. Igualment, hi ha altres indicadors més concrets, com haver estat en vigència, durant el període estudiat dues distincions a la recerca aleshores atorgades pel Departament d'Universitat, Recerca i Societat de la Informació (DURSI) del Govern autonòmic) (una a la UdL entre 2000 i 2004, i una altra a la UdG entre 2004 i 2008) a fi de reconèixer el nivell d'excel·lència en la recerca.

Una darrera reflexió és la desigual relació entre els medievalistes i els paleògrafs. Aquests darrers no han estat ser inclosos en cap dels càlculs estadístics i reflexions del present informe, atès que configuren una àrea específica, de Ciències i Tècniques Historiogràfiques. Tanmateix, desenvolupen una activitat molt propera als medievalistes, prou evidenciada en la mateixa proximitat en l'articulació organitzativa. Estan presents a la UB, UAB, UdG i URV, sempre compartint departament amb els medievalistes. La major presència correspon a la UB: en el període estudiat s'han produït dues promocions de TU a CU (2004 i 2009), la jubilació de dos CU (2003 i 2008) la continuïtat de 1 TU i la incorporació d'un nou TU el 2003; a més s'han emprat les figures contractuals per a establitzar professorat: amb la condició d'agregada s'ha pogut consolidar una associada el 2006 i un titular interí d'escola universitària el 2009, alhora que s'han generat quatre noves places d'*associat*, una el 2006, dues el 2008 i una el 2009. A la UAB, s'ha mantingut la plaça de CU, així com la d'un CU emèrit, i s'han generat dues TU, un el 2003 i un altre el 2009, amortitzant places prèvies, respectivament, d'ajudant i d'associat, comptant a més amb una becària des de 2007. Finalment, s'ha mantingut estable, en aquesta àrea de Ciències i Tècniques historiogràfiques, el TU present tant a UdG com a URV.

1.4 Grups de recerca, projectes i convenis

Els investigadors tenen assumit com a marc de treball bàsic el projecte de recerca. Només el 4% treballa de forma aliena als projectes de recerca, un altre 2% hi participa ocasionalment i la



resta, és a dir, el 94%, participa de forma permanent en els projectes de recerca competitiu. En el 11,11% dels projectes s'han cercat interdisciplinarietats que van més enllà de l'edat mitjana, des d'un punt de vista temàtic i cronològic. En la resta, els projectes s'han centrat bàsicament en el període medieval, encara que sigui comptant amb la col·laboració d'altres àrees de coneixement dedicades a l'estudi de l'edat mitjana. Alhora, també s'ha cercat una certa transversalitat, en aplegar investigadors de diferents centres entorn a temes de recerca comuns. Per això un 22'22% dels investigadors ha participat en projectes liderats des d'altres centres universitaris. La mateixa xifra permet copsar que la majoria restant participa en projectes dels propis centres. En un sentit semblant, es percep una forta estabilitat pel que fa a IP. Dels 23 investigadors que han constatat com a Investigadors Principals (IP) en projectes del "Plan Nacional I+D+I" atorgats pel ministeri espanyol durant el període analitzat, en 16 existeix una continuïtat prèvia o posterior d'una condició similar en el lideratge de recerca.

Destaca el majoritari recurs als projectes demanats al "Plan Nacional I+D+I", elaborat pel *Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología* el 2003 i, a partir de 2004, pel *Ministerio de Ciencia e Investigación* (MICINN), en el marc del qual s'han gestionat 31 projectes en els centres de recerca en història medieval durant el període analitzat. Al mateix temps, els investigadors també han participat en convocatòries públiques i assolit projectes de recerca convocats per l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans, fundacions i governs autonòmics que fan aquest tipus de convocatòries. És també de destacar que els investigadors han excel·lit en captar un important nombre d'ajuts a la recerca, que han possibilitat la realització d'accions mobilitzadores, com ara reunions científiques i excavacions. En la majoria dels casos es tracta de convocatòries competitives, bé que també cal incloure específics convenis sota els mateixos objectius.

Es percep, alhora, una voluntat internacionalitzadora. 3 universitats (UdL, UAB, URV) han liderats projectes de recerca competitiu guanyats en convocatòries que exigeixen el treball conjunt amb equips internacionals, ja sigui a través dels programes del MICINN (acciones integradas) o del govern autonòmic català (programes ACL i Batista Roca atorgats per l'Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca-AGAUR). També cal afegir en el mateix sentit els convenis del CSIC amb centres de recerca d'Itàlia i del Marroc. En canvi sobta l'escassa participació en convocatòries dels diferents organismes europeus de recerca (European Science Foundation —ESF—, European Research Council —ERC— European Commission —EC— especialment.). Només el 12,74% dels investigadors (pertanyents a UB, UAB i UdL) formen part, en el període estudiat, de projectes de recerca aprovats per organismes europeus, i tan sols hi ha dos projectes liderats des d'universitats catalanes (UAB, UdL).

Recerques ben properes han estat empenyades des de l'àrea de Ciències i Tècniques històriques, cosa que afegiria 3 projectes del Plan Nacional I+D+I a la UAB i 1 a la UB, així com 1 projecte per convocatòria del propi centre universitari a la UB, a més de 3 ajuts guanyats per la UB i 6 per la UAB.

La generalització del sistema de treballs en projectes de recerca configura la participació del medievalisme en els paràmetres usuals de la producció científica actual. Alhora, comporta que els investigadors han assumit haver de dedicar part del seu temps de recerca a les tasques burocràtiques inherents a elaborar, presentar i gestionar projectes, sobretot perquè normalment no disposen de personal tècnic auxiliar qualificat per aquestes funcions. També, evidentment, queda condicionada l'orientació de la recerca, no sols temàticament sinó formalment, perquè projectes de recerca de curta durada —en general tres anys—, poc dotats econòmicament, que obliguen a articular plans

de treballs coherents entre diversos investigadors i exigeixen publicar resultats científics entorn del mateix període d'execució, solen abocar a una suma d'aportacions de dimensions menors més que no pas a recerques que poguessin combinar la profunditat d'estudi amb una visió més ample.

L'hàbit de treball en equip que denota la importància dels projectes de recerca, concorda amb l'increment de l'articulació en grups de recerca. Només el 3,34% dels investigadors no s'enquadra en un grup de recerca consolidat (SGR), aprovats per l' "Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca" (AGAUR) durant el període estudiat. El 6% del professorat s'integra en grups de recerca consolidats de transversalitat cronològica i liderats fora de l'àmbit medieval. Destaquen els que són liderats per antropòlegs: el Grup d'Antropologia Social de la URV i l'Observatori de l'Alimentació (ODELA) de la UB. Mentre el primer d'aquests casos ha comportat una certa renúncia a les línies de recerca empentades des de la història medieval, en el segon s'ha efectuat un encaix ben fructífer per a una reconeguda línia de recerca des del medievalisme entorn a la història de l'alimentació. La resta de medievalistes s'aplega entorn a grups liderats per medievalistes, tot encabint també, vies d'interdisciplinarietat.

D'aquesta manera, es pot considerar que els grups de recerca reconeguts per l'AGAUR emmarquen la recerca en història medieval. Ben significativament, el nombre de grups de recerca consolidats ha anat augmentant, bé que sense deixar de denotar l'estabilitat en l'estructura d'investigació. Tres grups de recerca consolidats han estat reconeguts a les tres convocatòries del període estudiat: el 2001, el 2005 i el 2009: el "Grup de Recerca d'Arqueologia Medieval i Postmedieval" de la UB i dos grups del CSIC: el "Grup de Renda Feudal i Fiscalitat a la Catalunya baix-medieval" i el "Grup de Recerca de la Corona Catalano-aragonesa, l'Islam i el món mediterrani". Aquests s'amplien amb la participació, des de 2005, d'un grup assentat a la UdL, el "Grup de Recerca consolidat en Estudis Medievals Espai, Poder i Cultura", el qual serà revalidat el 2009 i, a partir d'aquesta mateixa convocatòria, la incorporació d'uns altres dos provinents de la UAB: el grup sobre "Ocupació, Organització i Defensa del Territori Medieval" i el centrat en "Arqueologia Agrària de l'Edat Mitjana". Així mateix, tant a la convocatòria de 2005 com a la de 2009 s'han afegit dos grups més a la UB, un sobre estudis de gènere, de ventall cronològic més ample, però liderat des de l'àmbit medieval i força cohesionat gràcies a un profund rodatge en els anys previs —"Projecte Duoda. Biblioteca Virtual Duoda"— i un altre que ha evolucionat, des d'una inicial orientació pedagògica el 2005, ("Taedium. Grup de Recerca d'història medieval i Innovació Docent Universitària"), cap a una específica orientació sobre textos el 2009: "Grup de recerca en història Medieval: fonts i estudis", deixant en un apartat docent intern, reconegut per la pròpia universitat, la primera advocació.

Amb 32 membres el grup més extens, i 8 el més reduït, els grups de recerca consolidats tenen una dimensió mitjana de 16,37 investigadors i es mostren, en tots els casos, clarament interuniversitaris, cercant les sinergies en la temàtica transversal escollida com a comú denominador, cosa que també hi aplega investigadors aliens al sistema científic. No es sumen, doncs, laboratoris sinó investigadors individuals, sovint de diferents centres, inclosos alguns de fora del sistema investigador català amb clares apostes per incloure recercadors estrangers, amb el comú denominador d'estar treballant temes similars. La dispersió inherent a aquesta estructura remarca la necessitat d'establir fórmules de connexió científica entre els membres, tot deixant oberta una reflexió sobre les dificultats de gestió i respecte de les condicions idònies per al correcte i cohesionat funcionament d'un grup de recerca.

Tot tractant de graduar els grups, l'organisme pertinent —AGAUR— concedeix uns petits ajuts genèrics inicials als que han estat millor valorats, els quals esdevenen així grups finançats. Es tracta



de dotacions ben limitades, que es poden incrementar perquè la condició de consolidat és tinguda en compte a l'hora de sol·licitar altres ajuts. Igualment, els diferents centres de recerca solen completar els ajuts genèrics dins de polítiques que, alhora solen establir una gradació de la resta de grups interns

Els membres de l'àrea de Ciències i Tècniques Historiogràfiques també participen de l'interès per treballar integrats en grups de recerca reconeguts, demostrant de nou la proximitat amb el medievalisme mitjançant la presència de membres d'aquesta àrea de coneixement en 2 dels grups de recerca consolidats liderats per medievalistes a la UB. De manera més específica, el 2009 la UAB obté, dins de la mateixa convocatòria de SGR, la consideració emergent de Grup de Recerca Singular (GRS) per al grup liderat des de l'àrea de Ciències i Tècniques Historiogràfiques.

La composició dels projectes de recerca i dels grups de recerca mostra una contradicció en la política dels centres, perquè la dinàmica a la transversalitat mostrada pels investigadors, tendent a cercar agrupacions temàtiques que permetin coordinar investigadors de diferents centres, es contradiu amb les polítiques desplegades per les diferents universitats, tendents a prevaler projectes i grups de recerca assentats a cada universitat. Això, per altra banda sembla de difícil viabilitat ateses les reduïdes dimensions de la majoria dels centres, a no ser que s'avanci vers grups grans que no tinguin en compte l'especialització en història medieval, o que, pel contrari, es prefereixin grups de dimensions ben reduïdes.

En qualsevol cas, la dinàmica d'esmerçar energies, per part dels mateixos investigadors en participar a les convocatòries públiques mitjançant articular projectes, conjuntar grups, recercar ajuts i promoure convenis, dóna els seus fruits en l'obtenció del finançament amb què desenvolupar les diferents tasques i activitats de recerca. El conjunt de recursos aconseguits en el període estudiat comporta una xifra total de 3.393.339,77 €, corresponents 1.959.827,83 € a projectes i 1.433.511,94 € a diversos tipus d'ajuts. Són quantitats distribuïdes de manera ben diversa segons centres a tenor de les diferents iniciatives. Per una banda, el gruix de la xifra global obliga a qüestionar-se si una inversió d'aquestes dimensions ha comportat una reversibilitat científica i social, és a dir, si els projectes de recerca i les diverses activitats (excavacions, reunions científiques...) eren inassolibles sense ajut econòmic i si han culminat amb uns resultats ben palpables, especialment en forma de publicacions, que palesin un avenç significatiu en el coneixement de la història medieval. Per altra banda, la diversitat de projectes i activitats en què es distribueixen aquestes quantitats al llarg d'un septenni es tradueix en una mitjana de 484.762,81€ anuals a distribuir entre tots els centres i iniciatives, cosa que enllaça amb les queixes dels investigadors per l'escassa dotació dels respectius projectes i iniciatives. Tot plegat, deixa oberta la reflexió sobre com assolir una major eficàcia en la inversió en la recerca.

1.5 Doctorats i màsters

Les dimensions reduïdes de la majoria dels centres universitaris i el canvi en els plans docents que s'opera durant el període estudiat afecta el sistema de formació de nous investigadors. Enlloc no s'ofereixen cursos de doctorat específics i màster conduents al doctorat en història medieval, bé que tant a la UB com a la UAB s'elaboraren combinacions amb àmbits cronològics propers. En la primera s'oferia fins 2005 un curs de doctorat comú amb història moderna: "Món medieval i Modern: últimes línies de recerca"; i en la segona es succeïren tres programes de doctorat: "doctorat en Arqueologia i Història Antiga i Medieval (2002-2005); "Arqueologia, Història Antiga i Medieval

i Ciències i Tècniques Historiogràfiques" (2004-2006); "Recerca en Història Antiga i Medieval" (2005-2008). A la UB es va passar al "Màster en Cultures Medievales", compartit amb les altres àrees de recerca sobre el període medieval, especialment les filològiques, mentre que a la UAB es va adoptar, des de 2007, el "Màster de Ciències de l'Antiguitat i l'Edat Mitjana", dins del programa "Cultures en contacte a la Mediterrània".

A la UdG es participava en un programa de doctorat en "Ciències Humanes i de la Cultura", que el curs 2008-2009 deixà pas al màster d'iniciació a la recerca en "Humanitats: història, Art, Filosofia, Llengua i Literatura". Aquest, de conjunt dels seus 60 crèdits, ofereix un itinerari formatiu de 30 crèdits sobre "Cultura i societat a l'època medieval". No hi ha en canvi, en el període estudiat, una formació específica a UPF, UdL i URV. Tanmateix, en aquesta hi havia, des de 2003, presència medieval al màster "Arqueologia clàssica" i, des de 2004, en el "Màster d'Estudis culturals Mediterranis". A partir de 2009 en aquest centre s'orienta la iniciació a la recerca en història medieval dins del màster de 60 crèdits "Societats Històriques i Formes Polítiques a Europa", en la que s'hi encabeix la formació en història medieval, encara que sense gaudir d'itinerari propi.

Aquesta disparitat en la formació no mostra una relació directa amb el número de becaris en formació doctoral, ben elevat en un centre sense pla formatiu específic (UdL) i en un altre que, pel seu caire investigador, manca de capacitat per desenvolupar plans docents propis (CSIC). Semblantment, les ofertes formatives més especialitzades, ofertes per la UB i la UAB, es corresponen amb un número ben dispar de becaris.

En el finançament de les beques doctorals es mostra destacada l'aportació efectuada pel ministeri del govern espanyol -30,76% del total, en el cas del CSIC incrementat perquè el marc jurídic dificulta la seva participació en les convocatòries del govern autonòmic. Aquest, però, va assolint el pes destacat, assolint el 46,75% del total. El propi centre ha atorgat beques doctorals en quatre casos (el 17,95% del total), arribant a suposar la tercera part de les concedides a la UB i la UdG. Alhora, tant el CSIC com la UdG han aconseguit sumar-hi beques doctorals provinents de fundacions i de convenis específics.

La capacitat per canalitzar una específica i qualitativa formació investigadora en història medieval dins del context del nou marc docent tot just encetat en acabar el període analitzat, esdevé tot un repte que condicionarà, sens dubte, la viabilitat i qualitat de la recerca en el futur.

1.6 Revistes especialitzades

Les revistes de recerca, en el competitiu context actual, esdevenen un indicador de qualitat per raó de la seva funció d'atreure investigadors d'altres centres que escullen aquest mitjà per a difondre les seves recerques. Diverses revistes científiques catalanes canalitzen investigacions sobre el període medieval, que seran publicades, sota el vector comú que sigui propi de la revista, juntament amb textos referents a altres períodes històrics. De manera molt més concreta, dos centres de recerca mantenen revistes específiques sobre Història Medieval: *Acta Historica et Archaeologica Mediaevalia*, vinculada a la UB des de 1980, i *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* del CSIC, on s'hi manté des de 1964. Mentre aquesta darrera s'ha adequat als nous indicadors de qualitat, assolint una posició de referència internacional, la primera ha continuat, en el període estudiat, sense incorporar els indicadors actualment demanats per les agències d'avaluació de la qualitat de les revistes científiques. Ja en aquest nou marc, el 2007 la UdL afegeix una nova revista especialitzada en la recerca medieval: *Imago Temporis Medium Aevum*.



2. Producció científica

2.1 Línies fortes de recerca

L'anomenada crisi de la història, que donà lloc a explícites publicacions de reflexió arreu del món la darrera dècada del segle XX, coincidia a Catalunya amb el final d'unes dècades en què el quefer de l'historiador s'havia sentit interpel·lat per demandes de revisió social i identitària que, d'una o altra manera, havien pogut incidir en l'hermenèutica aplicada a l'heurística. Així, no pas establint una ruptura amb els fases prèvies sinó mostrant que s'han paït les aportacions de les etapes precedents, en la primera dècada del segle XXI la recerca en història medieval pot avançar cap a noves línies conductores. La investigació en història medieval ha catalitzat, en el període ara analitzat, una contundent revisió, amb uns mètodes molts atents a les fonts i amb un treball preocupat per renovar els eixos conductors. Exemplifica aquest canvi el fet que la part d'història medieval de la "Història de Catalunya" dirigida per A. Balcells publicada el 2004 i amb nombroses reedicions posteriors, mostra uns plantejaments explicatius ben diferents als exposats en totes les històries generals precedents.⁷

Per una banda, l'adopció del "poder" com a vector conductor permetia reprendre la història política, amarada d'història social, i replantejar la mateixa estructura institucional de la Corona d'Aragó i, específicament, de Catalunya, tot podent revisar no sols l'articulació del govern sinó els encaixos entre els diferents grups socials i la gestació dels determinats discursos de justificació política. La relació entre unes societats urbanes vigoroses i un entorn jurisdiccionalment fragmentat, sota un monarquia feble, imposa un específic disseny institucional i social. El acords vinculants entre ciutats i viles (carreratge), la milícia popular (sometent) l'actuació dels oficials jurisdiccionals, el comportament dels estaments a les corts, el paper i actuació de l'Església en la seva diversitat, l'articulació de la "terra" en la diputació permanent de les corts (General), el pes exigít per la capital del país, la narrativa i l'escenografia del poder regi, la moneda en el joc del poder, etc... són peces diverses que han pogut ser encaixades des d'una nova perspectiva que dóna més valor a una arquitectura institucional i social basada en la concordança de tots els grups de pressió, segons el vigor polític, social i econòmic baixmedieval.

Aquest plantejament troba diferents punts d'intersecció amb la prolongació de la destacada tasca efectuada des de la dècada anterior per part dels historiadors centrats en l'estudi de les finances reials, especialment en el seu encaix amb l'administració municipal, cosa que obre un enriquidor finestrall vers l'anàlisi de la funció del deute públic en les relacions institucionals, socials i econòmiques, i vers la revisió del seu impacte en la societat urbana, tant per la càrrega impositiva i la seva distribució, com per les ramificacions en les relacions entre els nuclis urbans i els entorns rurals.

Per aquí s'enllaça amb els estudis específics sobre la societat rural baixmedieval, afectada per la relació vilatana, la fractura jurisdiccional i l'evolució del domini senyorial, amb les conseqüències exactives i socials. S'han pogut revisar importants aspectes, des de la tinença de la terra a la redimensió de la veritable significació dels mals usos, especialment la remença.

L'encaix entre societat i poder aboca a la revisió d'un altre pern, l'econòmic, a partir d'atendre la mateixa vivència social, ja sigui en conèixer l'interior de la casa burgesa, el recorregut de les merca-

7. Sabaté, Flocel. "Catalunya Medieval", *Història de Catalunya*, Albert Balcells, ed. Barcelona: L'Esfera dels Llibres, 2004: 101-334.

deries, l'anàlisi dels mitjans de transport marítim i de la xarxa viària, l'explotació de recursos naturals i artesanals, els circuits d'esclaus, el mercat de la terra o els gruixos del crèdit, a més d'analitzar el comportament, en tots els aspectes, de famílies situades en els diferents nivells de l'estrat social. La suma d'aquestes vies permet obtenir una visió més ajustada i coordinada de la realitat, cosa que incita a apamar, revisar i ressituar antics llocs comuns com la pretesa llarga crisi baixmedieval.

La combinació dels vectors polítics, militars, socials i econòmics a la baixa edat mitjana remet a la revisió de la projecció exterior de Catalunya, revisant la relació amb els altres regnes de la Península o, encara més, mirant vers la Mediterrània, ja sigui cap a l'Orient comercial, cap a l'espai italià o també vers els sectors occidentals. Així s'ha pogut conèixer millor els mecanismes d'incidència a Sicília i encara més a Sardenya, i renovar el coneixement de la relació amb el nord d'Àfrica i, destacadament, amb Granada, cosa que remet, alhora, a reflexionar sobre els interessos en joc en el tracte, econòmic i social, amb l'alteritat ideològica en el context d'un mediterrani comú.

La introducció de nous vectors socials ha permès que continuessin fructificant plantejaments encetats en les dècades precedents, com la revisió de la funció cultural i social de l'alimentació en els diferents grups socials, o en els estudis de gènere en la seva àmplia gamma que cerca copsar la pluralitat de vessants ocupats per la dona. L'afany per retrobar les persones i les motius del seu comportament ha obert innovadores vies d'accés cap a l'axiologia i les creences, incloent l'escorcoll de les biblioteques particulars dels burgesos barcelonins, la revisió de l'espiritualitat, el misticisme femení i la funció de l'escriptura. Es tracta d'encertar els elements sobre els que la societat, en els seus diferents grups socials, cohesiona la pròpia identitat, genera una memòria i ho justifica mitjançant una específica ideologia. En aquest sentit, la consolidació de la societat sota un cristianisme segur i excloent atrau l'atenció vers les minories inassimilables encabides, és a dir, jueus i musulmans. L'encaix —o el desencontre— mutu també s'ha estudiat en els moments de topada expansiva, especialment en els segles XII i XIII.

L'estudi de la societat des de les seves mancances ha portat a analitzar tant aspectes vinculats a l'incompliment de normes, el trencament de l'ordre social, la definició del mal que ha de ser punit (heretgia, fetilleria, delinqüència, criminalitat...) i l'actuació de la justícia, com al comportament de la societat davant l'adversitat, ja siguin les calamitats naturals o les caresties i fams. Aquest darrer vessant ha continuat avançant entorn als problemes d'abastament a les viles i ciutats, alhora que també ha pouat en l'allargament del ventall cronològic cap als segles centrals de l'edat mitjana. En tots els casos, s'hi ha cercat tant la incidència en l'economia com, destacadament, la resposta de la societat davant les dificultats, cosa que ha permès comparar-hi els diferents grups socials i l'exercici del poder inherent.

L'atenció vers els segles centrals de l'edat mitjana ha aportat nous punts d'anàlisi sobre l'evolució social, percaçats en revisar el mercat de la terra, els règims de tinença, l'establiment de vinculacions de dependència, els gravàmens exactius o la progressiva articulació territorial en els seus diferents nivells i continguts. Per aquí s'han culminat revisions que ja havien estat apuntades en la dècada precedent, tot posant en relació les estructures familiars, les senyories, la funció dels mercats vilatans i, en definitiva, la generació dels valors justificatius, amb el concurs de l'Església, la pretensió d'afermament reial, l'assumpció per part de la noblesa i la receptibilitat en la pagesia. La irrupció d'un específic grup burgès, en aquests mateixos segles centrals, comporta unes noves exigències d'encaix que han pogut ser objecte d'estudi en societats noves, com Tarragona, Tortosa o Lleida, facilitant així la continuïtat en l'engranatge explicatiu. Ordes religiosos expandits en aquest



context, com el Císter, els ordes militars o els canonges premostratosos, han gaudit d'una específica perspectiva en aquest marc d'anàlisi.

En interrogar-se pels valors cohesionadors de la societat dels segles centrals, ha calgut aprofundir en la interpretació de la violència, entesa com un element del sistema, revisant els continguts de conceptes com guerra i pau i el seu encaix amb l'evolució de la feudalitat. Aquesta revisió conceptual ha facilitat, també, una millor comprensió del funcionament polític, incloent-hi la relació amb l'entorn occità i provençal.

La revisió dels segles altmedievals ha aprofundit en la importància de l'escriptura i la seva funció. Alhora també s'ha assolit una visió més equilibrada entre els diferents comtats així com l'evolució de la frontera. Aquesta, en si mateixa desenvolupa tot un nou vector explicatiu. Una frontera amb dos costats, cosa que ha vingut acompanyat de nous anàlisis en l'estudi dels espais andalusins, emprant una renovació metodològica tot pretenent obtenir noves respostes de l'amalgama de fonts diverses i disperses.

La perspectiva jurídica, social i política ha tractat de renovar la recerca sobre el període carolingi, plantejant les qüestions entorn de les creences i la noció pública, així com la projecció, en tots els vessants, sobre el territori. La comparativa hispànica d'aquesta societat altmedieval i les arrels visigodes també han estat objecte d'assenyada revisió des de la perfilació i anàlisi del poder reial, l'articulació de l'aristocràcia, la funció de l'Església i l'existència d'una dissidència sota forma religiosa.

La meitat dels grups de recerca consolidats el 2009 fan al·lusió a l'espai físic: dos en definir-se com a grups d'"arqueologia", un altre incloent la paraula "espai" en el seu enunciat i, el darrer, invocant el "territori medieval". Des de vessants molt diferents, l'espai, el territori i el paisatge han esdevingut objecte d'estudi, afectant tot el ventall cronològic i amb resultats ben diferents. El territori ha de ser vist com l'espill de la societat i, per tant, en mostrar la seva articulació institucional o en reflectir les disputes endegades al seu damunt, l'espai ofereix un retrat polític i social, ja sigui a l'interior urbà —fins i tot domèstic— o en un paisatge rural progressivament antropomorfitzat.

Les problemàtiques inherents a les fonts imposen prudències en algunes deduccions arqueològiques, sobretot quan s'interroga el territori o el paisatge sobre realitats allunyades cronològicament i no prou contrastades a causa de les mateixes dificultats heurístiques. En altres casos, el treball arqueològic ha de tractar de superar estadis descriptius per avançar cap a aportacions sòlides. També s'ha avançat en la perspectiva comparativa, prou palesada en la tasca desenvolupada pels grups de recerca consolidats en arqueologia medieval en actuar en un cas al Iemen i en altre al nord de Castella i al País Basc, amb les corresponents aportacions bibliogràfiques.

D'una i altra manera, l'arqueologia mostra la seva vivor entre el medievalisme català, com també ho evidencia el sorgiment d'una col·lecció de llibres específica a la UdL. Corresponentment, ha conduït propostes de renovació metodològica o conceptual. Un grup de recerca transita un específic entramat interpretatiu des de l'estudi de la funció de l'aigua en l'agricultura i, a partir d'aquí, en l'articulació social, econòmica i política de la societat musulmana, cap a una més comprensiva arqueologia agrària. Des d'altres àmbits també s'ha puat en una arqueologia que, sobretot a través d'una prospecció sistemàtica, obri vies amb què penetrar en els espais més inconeguts de la societat andalusí, cercant aliatges amb eines com la toponímia i tractant de revisar territoris poc atesos (àmbits de secà, fronterers...) i, també, reinterpretar la territorialització des de vessants com el defensa, cosa que, de nou, reclama prudències en les deduccions.

Aquests apropaments a la societat islàmica, i especialment l'andalusina, es complementen amb els efectuats des de l'estudi de la moneda, amb tota la seva significació no sols econòmica sinó fiscal, social, política i institucional. De manera ben diferents, la societat islàmica també ha estat investigada des dels fonaments i discursos del poder en períodes com l'omeia, o des d'una penetració en el pensament per tal de copsar valors i eixos identitaris en aspectes com el gènere i l'alteritat.

En tots els casos, les recerques s'han enriquit en continuar la progressiva aportació de fonts, de forma desigual i aleatòria, tasca que conforma una intersecció entre historiadors, paleògrafs i estudiosos locals, en tots els casos altament profitosa en incrementar les fonts en circulació. S'hi ha afegit un específic treball de recerca i estudi d'arxius particulars, alhora que molts dels arxius oberts al públic han millorat l'accés a les fonts inèdites, gràcies a la informatització que ha anat possibilitat també l'accés a les fonts per internet.

2.2 Tesis doctorals

Durant el període estudiat es van llegir 28 tesis doctorals, el 71,42% de les quals es van defensar a la UB. Tres d'aquests doctorands són de procedència estrangera que han completat la seva formació a la UB. El conjunt català fou dirigit per 14 directors de tesi (una mitjana, doncs, de 2 tesis per cada director), cosa que denota una certa concentració en el lideratge de la recerca, també pel que fa a la formació. Dues terceres parts d'aquestes tesis es centren en el període baixmedieval, i la resta en l'edat mitjana alta o central. Han pogut innovar en aspectes ben diversos, si bé destaca la interrogació del territori com espill de la societat en els diferents períodes (la transició des del món clàssic, la societat andalusina, el paisatge comtal, les transformacions arran de les conquestes dels segles XII i XIII o l'articulació de la societat rural baixmedieval), enllaçant amb la funció del mercat, les produccions i distribucions artesanals, els circuits comercials i l'abastament de la ciutat baixmedieval, amb totes les implicacions en el govern urbà i els comportaments socials. La preocupació per la identitat de la societat baixmedieval ha clarificat aspectes com la religiositat en l'expressivitat femenina o els eixos vivencials burgesos, facilitant la revisió de la puixança urbana, ja sigui en les relacions de poder expressades en àmbits com les corts, o en la imposició sobre l'entorn rural en aspectes com la remença. Llevat de casos força concrets, la recerca s'ha centrat en el cas català. Formalment, totes aparenten tenir la màxima vàlua, atès que han rebut la màxima qualificació, quatre d'elles arrodonides amb el premi extraordinari.

Arran de la progressiva reforma de l'ensenyament, la tesi doctoral es presenta encaixonada en un calendari de realització molt concret. La realitat, però, s'evidencia ben diferent: la majoria de les tesis són defensades en dates força posteriors a la finalització de la beca doctoral. De les 25 beques doctorals finalitzades en aquest període, només 8 (30,76%) han desembocat en la defensa d'una tesi doctoral l'any següent. En la majoria dels casos en el període estudiat, per tant, les lectures de tesis han correspost a becaris que han deixat transcorre uns anys entre la finalització del gaudi de la beca doctoral i la defensa de la tesi. La condició de becari doctoral s'evidencia com la via habitual: sols un 11,53% dels qui han assolit el grau de doctor ho han fet sense haver gaudir prèviament d'una beca doctoral.

La contrarietat de les tesis no es conclouen en acabar el període de gaudi de la beca doctoral remet a la dificultat per encabir les recerques en un model de *cursus honorum* rígid i regular en la formació universitària, en el que la fase predoctoral vingui seguida per la lectura immediata de la tesi i el pas a figures postdoctorals. Tanmateix, el més preocupant són els casos en què el gaudi de



beques doctorals no culmini en la defensa i aprovació de les respectives tesis doctorals, en tant que fan témer un malbaratament en la inversió formadora i un fracàs en el mateix procés formatiu.

2.3 Publicacions. Bibliometria

Durant el període estudiat, els medievalistes catalans han efectuat 1.249 publicacions. El 55,8% d'aquestes obres han estat en forma de capítol de llibre i el 31,46% com article. L'elevat volum de publicacions de dimensions menors mitjançant els capítols de llibre i els articles concorda amb les coetànies directrius en la recerca i és coherent amb els projectes de recerca. Tanmateix, els mitjans de difusió científica són molt propers i en general aliens als àmbits punters. Es genera així un decalatge entre la qualitat de la recerca assolida i els mitjans de difusió, que majoritàriament s'escullen propers, de curt radi i escassa internacionalització.

Els llibres reflecteixen la mateixa dinàmica científica, amb elevada presència de recopilatoris i compendis a costat d'obres que culminen recerques força completes.

2.4 Projectió internacional de la recerca

Els medievalistes catalans participen de la recerca en els punts de referència internacional: el 77,42% dels investigadors consolidats (CU, TU i agregats) ha participat activament en congressos o seminaris científics a l'estranger durant el període estudiat, i una cinquena part (20,30%) dels mateixos ha efectuat estades en centres de recerca l'exterior superiors a 1 mes.

A més, el *cursus honorum* va incorporant una estada postdoctoral a l'estranger. En el període analitzat, 5 investigadors han guanyat una plaça postdoctoral en universitats estrangeres. 2 d'ells procedien de la UAB, 2 de la UdL i 1 de la UB. En 3 casos ha estat sota finançament del ministeri del Govern d'Espanya, en 1 pels programes de mobilitat del govern autonòmic de Catalunya i en el darrer gràcies a finançament europeu (programa Marie Curie). D'acord amb les seves recerques i en coherència amb la tradició medievalista catalana, 3 cercaren universitats franceses, i en els altres dos casos s'acolliren a centres italians. Significativament, en acabar la seva estada de dos anys, 2 han estat reincorporats a la universitat d'origen (UAB, UdL), 2 han trobat plaça en altres universitats catalanes (UdL) i 1 s'ha estabilitzat al mateix centre de recerca estranger que l'havia acollit. La capacitat de recuperar els investigadors formats a l'estranger esdevé un clar benefici pel sistema universitari català, per la formació i pels contactes assolits. Tanmateix, bé que en el període analitzat s'ha aconseguit recuperar 4 dels 5 enviats a l'estranger (i el restant es manté dins del sistema de recerca, bé que en un altre país), en tots els casos ho han fet en places contractuals temporals sobre les que no pot deixar de planar la incertesa vers el futur.

Aquestes estratègies permeten refermar els llaços entre investigadors nacionals i estrangers. De fet, la relació estreta es constata per moltes vies. Una és l'existència de destacats investigadors estrangers que centren la seva recerca sobre temàtica catalana, sovint mantenint una permanent relació amb la medievalística catalana. En el període analitzat s'han produït aportacions cabdals d'un llarg seguit d'autors: Thomas N. Bisson, Jeffrey A. Bowman, Damien Coulon, Paul Freedman, Christian Guilleré, Adam Kosto, Damian Smith o Michel Zimmermann.

La relació mútua s'evidencia en el fet que les línies de recerca desenvolupades pels medievalistes catalanes denoten una bona sintonia amb els eixos centrals de la recerca internacional. Tanmateix, els objectes de la recerca es centren en el propi territori, i només rarament aprofiten una

comparativa amb altres àmbits. De tota manera, la producció científica del medievalisme català acostuma a estar ben representada en la participació en les indexacions internacionals. Gran part de les recerques efectuades pels autors catalans són recollides per bases de dades reconegudes com *Medioevo Latino*, *Regesta Imperii* i sobretot *l'International Medieval Bibliography*, aquesta darrera beneficiada per un acord específic entre el CSIC i el *Institute for Medieval Studies de la University of Leeds* a través de la redacció del *Repertorio del Medievalismo Hispánico*.

La transmissió de la recerca directament als àmbits internacionals, mitjançant publicacions a l'estranger és un recurs ben poc socorregut: els medievalistes catalans han publicat en l'estranger tan sols el 3,21% dels llibres, el 10,5% de les direccions científiques de llibres, el 14,65% dels capítols de llibre i el 6,65% dels articles. Encara més rarament han escollit idiomes de major ressò científic. El 57% de les publicacions empenen la llengua del país (català), seguit per un 31,95% en la llengua oficial de l'Estat Espanyol (castellà). En canvi, només un marginal 3,60% ha estat publicat en anglès, l'idioma que s'ha imposat com a *lingua franca* científica internacional. La llengua tradicionalment de referència en la formació medievalista en les dècades precedents, el francès, és una mica més recorreguda, bé que sense sortir de la marginalitat: l'han emprada un 4,72% de les publicacions. L'altre àmbit de referència natural del medievalisme català tradicional, Itàlia, sols ha incitat a un 2,4% de publicacions en aquesta llengua. És evident que, ben majoritàriament, s'escriu de cara a un escenari català o, en tot cas, hispànic.

La contradicció també es palesa, com hem comentat, en els projectes d'investigació: una presència gens menyspreable de projectes de recerca que requereixen *partners* internacionals —4 projectes a la UdL, 2 a la UAB, 1 a URV i 1 a CSIC— es contraposa a una escassa participació en projectes europeus, amb tan sols dos projectes liderats des de Catalunya (UAB i UdL).

En definitiva, més que una manca d'internacionalització, es produeix una disfunció, perquè les fites assolides en uns àmbits no es corresponen amb les mancances en altres: els investigadors participen en congressos i seminaris internacionals, una part d'ells fa estades en centres de recerca punters i evidencien uns contactes internacionals que, tanmateix, contrasten amb una contundent manca de presència en publicacions científiques internacionals.

2.5 Professionalització i projecció social de la recerca

El sistema reglat de recerca exigeix una completa professionalització i, fins i tot, uns *cursus honorum* força rígid. Tanmateix, hi ha quatre àmbits que aboquen tant a la transferència de continguts com a una intersecció d'objectius: les iniciatives dels centres d'estudis locals i comarcals tan arrelats en el teixit social català; les iniciatives d'ens locals, comarcals o provincials o autonòmics que acudeixen al referent històric per organitzar diferents actes cívics de caire commemoratiu i social; les activitats de difusió d'institucions culturals com museus i arxius; i fins i tot iniciatives comercials impulsades per editorials, tant pel que fa a llibres com a publicacions periòdiques.

Aquesta intersecció en uns casos redunda en benefici de la recerca i, en altres, es centra en la transferència de continguts. Així, iniciatives alienes als marcs propis de la recerca han facilitat l'organització de trobades científiques que combinen la difusió i transferència de continguts per un costat amb el benefici científic per altra, tot mostrant que la combinació d'iniciatives de procedència ben diversa pot fructificar beneficis per ambdós costats, és a dir, per a la difusió i per a la recerca. En altres casos, s'aprecia la intervenció directa de l'investigador en funcions de transferència de continguts, ja siguin conferències de divulgació o publicacions fora dels mitjans científics.



El 33,92%, dels investigadors ha publicat en revistes d'àmbit local o comarcal o en revistes de divulgació històrica i cultural. Prop de la tercera part dels investigadors ha participat en obres de divulgació, amb una intensitat variable, que pot arribar, en un cas, a ser una destacada opció preferent. Alhora, la funció social de la història medieval també ha facilitat una presència relativament reiterada d'investigadors en mitjans de comunicació, ja siguin de premsa, ràdio o televisió, que en alguns casos esdevé força habitual.

Aquesta participació en diversos nivells de contacte permet constatar la disposició dels investigadors vers la divulgació. Es pot raonar que la transferència de continguts esdevé una fita coherent amb la vinculació funcional de l'historiador professional, sostingut amb diner públic, essent així coherent que en derivi una transferència de continguts. Alhora, el fet que dues tercers parts dels investigadors no participin en aquest tipus de publicacions no deixa de concordar amb la prudència que requereix el treball de investigador. Certament, la contudent especialització de cadascun dels deures en què estan involucrats els investigadors —recerca, docència i, en alguns casos, gestió—, amb les seves regulades exigències, dificulta afegir-hi un quart deure, de tal manera que un increment en la transferència de continguts s'evidencia en detriment de la mateixa recerca. Per això, és adient l'establiment de diferents marcs de col·laboració que facilitin contacte, assessorament, circulació de publicacions o qualsevol altre activitat, tot combinant així els esforços dels diferents implicats.

2.7 Congressos i col·loquis

En principi, els congressos i col·loquis haurien d'esdevenir un punt de trobada catalitzador de la recerca, i en tractar-se de trobades especialitzades, les publicacions resultants haurien d'esdevenir obres de referència. Tanmateix, l'estandardització dels valors de la recerca minven la valoració de publicacions en actes de congressos, cosa que ha pogut incidir en el desigual interès amb què els investigadors han acollit aquestes trobades. En qualsevol cas, els investigadors catalans han continuat confiant en què les reunions científiques generen un debat profitós i, per això, s'han abocat a organitzar-ne a diferents nivells. Tres són els tipus d'encontres que han fructificat en el període estudiat: els establitzats anualment; els organitzats per grups de recerca en funció de la seva activitat i els sorgits de commemoracions.

En el primer àmbit cal ressaltar les trobades estables. Es el cas de les organitzades per la UdL a Balaguer, que entre 2003 i 2009 organitzaren consecutivament la setena i la quatorzena edicions, aplegant especialistes internacionals entorn de "El poder a l'edat mitjana", "L'espai del Mal", "Balaguer 1105: cruïlla de civilitzacions", "Natura i desenvolupament: el medi ambient a l'edat mitjana", "Utopies i alternatives de vida a l'edat mitjana", "Idees de pau a l'edat Mitjana", "Identitats". El 2005 s'hi va afegir una trobada específica sobre arqueologia anual, que a partir de la seva segona edició, el 2007, esdevingué anual, reunint-se a Algerri i Lleida, tot centrant la focalitat de l'arqueologia medieval en "Reflexions des de la pràctica" (2005), "La transformació de la frontera medieval musulmana" (2007), "La prospecció del territori" (2008), "Els espais de secà" (2009). Totes aquestes trobades han establert una periodicitat regular i han generat actes posteriorment publicades. Amb un altre format, però igualment aplegant a investigadors destacats tot propiciant una obertura a la reflexió, a la UdG els medievalistes organitzen seminaris allargassats al llarg de tot el curs lectiu des de l'any escolar 2004-2005, amb una periodicitat anual que portà la sisena edició al curs 2009-2010.

Entre les trobades ocasionals els dos grups de recerca consolidat del CSIC han mantingut un ritme de reunions científiques de qualitat d'acord amb les seves recerques: "El camí de Sant Jaume i Catalunya" (2003), "La Corona catalano-aragonesa i el seu entorn mediterrani a la Baixa edat mitjana" (2003), "Negociar en la Edad Media" (2004), "Endeutament públic, monarquia i ciutats als regnes hispànics (segles XIV-XVII)" (2008); "Ciutat i Hospital a l'Occident europeu (segles XIII-XVIII)" (2009). Igualment, a la UAB els dos grups de recerca han articulat sengles trobades d'acord amb les respectives línies de recerca: "Fars de l'Islam. Antigues torres alimares d'al-Andalus" (2006) i "Per una arqueologia agrària. Perspectives de recerca a les societats medievals hispàniques" (2008). Per a la seva part, a la UPF s'han organitzat seminaris sumant la perspectiva medieval i moderna: "Notariat públic i història social a la Catalunya medieval i moderna" (2003).

Coetàniament, l'ús que les administracions públiques han fet de les commemoracions convida a ser prudent davant d'aquests reclams, bo i més quan a voltes els mitjans científics hi han respòs mitjançant actuacions repetitives més que no pas innovadores. Alhora, però, les demandes cíviques poden esdevenir un estímul per a la recerca. En aquest sentit cal destacar la trobada organitzada el 2008 per l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans sobre Jaume I, en remembrança del seu naixement, amb un ventall molt ample d'intervencions esteses al llarg del any mitjançant sessions sectorials celebrades a Barcelona, Lleida i Girona, a més de les reunions organitzades, fora de Catalunya, a Palma de Mallorca i Gandia.

3. Conclusions

Durant el període analitzat, el 14,28% del conjunt d'investigadors catalans en història medieval no es pot considerar que faci recerca, sinó, en tot cas, gestió i transferència de coneixement. La xifra s'eleva al 21,87% si cenyim el càlcul al professorat consolidat (CU, TU i agregats), tenint en compte que el 57,14% del darrer percentatge es situa en una franja d'edat laboralment avançada (més de 60 anys d'edat). El revers d'aquestes xifres indica, tanmateix, que un gruix molt elevat dels investigadors -85,72% de tots els nivells d'investigadors i el 78,13% dels consolidats- efectua, encara que sigui en ritmes de treball ben diferents, una veritable tasca de recerca, és a dir, de creació i renovació de coneixement.

Aquest treball el realitzen medievalistes distribuïts, de manera fortament atomitzada en set centres de recerca (CSIC, UB, UAB, UdL, UdG, URV, UPF), establint els mateixos investigadors, per raó de la coherència en la recerca, un entramat de connexions mitjançant compartir projectes d'investigació i grups de recerca consolidats. No existeix cap coordinació o pla de recerca global, bé que la suma de les diverses sinergies ofereix un conjunt força coherent i complet, centrat sobre els diversos àmbits i cronologies de la història de Catalunya, amb un clar predomini de la baixa edat mitjana. Excepte en el període altmedieval més reulat, els investigadors es centren sobre el propi país, essent abordades altres geografies en tot cas des de la perspectiva catalana. Les línies d'anàlisi adopten vies de renovació, amb vectors transversals com destacadament l'espai, el territori, el poder, l'espiritualitat, l'escriptura o, les ruptures de l'ordre social i natural. Mitjançant aquestes focalitats es contribueix a una renovació hermenèutica amb què analitzar una creixent aportació heurística, tot abocant així a una veritable —i necessària— renovació en el coneixement de la Catalunya medieval. Aquesta revisió no comporta cap ruptura sinó que s'evidencia com el fruit i evolució de les vies encetades en els anys precedents, fins al punt que algunes línies de recerca vigoroses palesen una via ascendent que prossegueix innovacions encetades en el període anterior



mitjançant l'estudi de la fiscalitat, l'alimentació, el gènere, la mobilitat i relació en el Mediterrani, o l'exercici jurisdiccional, com a casos ben clars.

La renovació assolida s'expressa en un volum prou elevat de productes científic: 1249 títols. Es concorda amb la bibliometria a què està actualment sotmesa la regulació de la recerca. Hi predominen els capítols de llibre, fidel reflex d'un treball més tradicional en el nostre medievalisme que no pas el "sotmetiment" d'articles per a ser avaluats i publicats que s'imposa actualment, i que segueix en segon lloc. Aquest format, coherent amb les línies d'avaluació que actualment promouen la publicació d'articles en revistes prestigioses més que no pas llibres, comporta, però, una atomització de la reflexió científica, sobretot si no ve culminada, en algun moment, per obres de recapitulació científica. En cercar una visió global del treball acadèmic, hom pot dubtar si es llegeix i paeix allò que es publica, i si es processa a fi d'obtenir un discurs historiogràfic comú o si, en canvi, cadascú va centrant-se en registrar les aportacions produïdes en el seu àmbit concret de treball. Tractant de coordinar la fragmentació, una major presència de publicacions en formats que permetessin una reflexió més profunda lligada a monografies analítiques, permetria assolir resultats més conclusius que, a la vegada, anirien clarificant i oferint noves pistes de recerca a prosseguir des d'una imprescindible comprensió global de la història medieval de Catalunya. En trobar a faltar reflexions d'aquests tipus, es posa en evidència no pas les mancances dels investigadors, sinó les febleses del sistema científic que s'està imposant.

El treball renovador de molts investigadors posa en evidència la necessària fragilitat de les fronteres acadèmiques amb altres àrees que també estudien l'edat mitjana, sigui des de la literatura, la història de l'art o de la filosofia, entre altres, a més de les transversalitats encetades per la paleografia o per la arqueologia. Resta així obert un altre repte la resolució del qual, mitjançant l'assoliment de nous ponts de col·laboració, s'imbrica amb els estímuls vers el futur en l'estudi de l'edat mitjana.

En donar a conèixer les seves recerques, els investigadors catalans han escollit, majoritàriament, uns mitjans de difusió i unes llengües que denoten una projecció hispana, allunyada dels circuits científics internacionals. Això, tanmateix, contrasta amb l'evident coneixement de les línies de recerca internacional i, fins i tot, amb la participació en elles a través, de manera destacada, de l'actuació activa en congressos i activitats internacionals per part d'un 77,42% del professorat consolidat.

Hi ha una bona salut en la investigació, a tenor de la qualitat de les aportacions i de la dinàmica de recerca. Per això encara crida més l'atenció que aquesta producció es destini sobretot al consum intern, descuidant molt la presència en mitjans internacionals malgrat que, al mateix temps, els investigadors estan en contacte amb la recerca internacional. L'elevat volum de producció científica i la riquesa conceptual del seu contingut s'aconsegueix malgrat que la majoria del personal investigador ha de compatibilitzar les seves tasques amb la docència i a voltes amb la gestió. De fet, la recerca resta supeditada a la docència, en tant que les plantilles dels centres es perfilen en funció d'aquesta i no pas per raó de la investigació. Es dona, a més, l'aparent paradoxa que no existeix una relació directa entre menor càrrega docent i major producció científica. El model d'estabilització es va alterant en aquest moment, preferint-se la consolidació contractual (lector, agregat) al sistema funcional. Tanmateix, la inestable mobilitat en els nivells inferiors del professorat i la vacil·lant reposició dels superiors obren incerteses, a les que també s'hi afegeix el repte de poder formar un bon planter jove de medievalistes a través dels nous plans educatius tot just implantats en els darrers anys aquí analitzats.

L'APLICACIÓ D'EINES INTERACTIVES I DIDÀCTIQUES PER COMPRENDRE EL PATRIMONI ROMÀNIC: UN ESTUDI DE CAS A ERILL LA VALL (LLEIDA)

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RESUM

En el present article s'analitza el concepte de centre d'interpretació com una eina eficaç per a comprendre el patrimoni. A la vegada, es presenta l'estudi de cas del Centre d'interpretació del Romànic de la Vall de Boí (CRVB) a Erill la Vall (Lleida).

Aquest model es selecciona després d'un estudi previ qualitatiu descriptiu de caràcter exploratori entre els centres d'interpretació del romànic disseminats en el marc del territori espanyol. Els resultats de l'anàlisi mostren que aquest cas inclou aquells aspectes bàsics establerts en la investigació per aconseguir ser un model educatiu que persegueix com a objectiu principal la correcta interpretació didàctica del romànic.

1. Introducció. Els centres d'interpretació: l'estat de la qüestió

A l'hora de valorar l'estat de la qüestió dels centres d'interpretació, cal tenir present que en la visita a un element patrimonial, el contacte visual amb l'objecte és indispensable, però també una bona intervenció basada en la didàctica i els principis de la interactivitat fa que l'espectador pugui anar un pas més enllà en la interpretació del patrimoni.

És obvi que la pròpia natura de les obres i la necessitat de vetllar per a la seva conservació ens porta en multitud d'ocasions a quedar-nos en un primer estadi contemplatiu. Però aquesta situació, que promou un buit infinit entre l'espectador i l'objecte, es pot reduir a través de la creació de components interactius i didàctics. Aquests elements d'interpretació, anomenats museografia, es concentren en equipaments patrimonials i especialment en els centres d'interpretació. Recordem que aquests espais neixen amb la voluntat de fer comprensible per al públic en general qualsevol tipus de concepte, etapa artística o històrica, època, element natural o fins i tot personatges. En realitat, un centre d'interpretació és:

un equipament creat per a posar en valor el patrimoni cultural i/o natural d'un espai determinat o d'una àrea geogràfica i transformar-lo en un producte didàctic, cultural i/o turístic. A diferència dels museus, aquests centres no col·leccionen, ni preserven ni estudien els objectes originals, però sí donen les claus per a permetre una millora en la comprensió del seu valor natural i cultural, per a alimentar la sensibilitat i la cultura, fent referència a alguna de les àrees del patrimoni cultural de la zona [...]. Aquesta és la solució possible per a difondre el concepte de patrimoni cultural en els petits nuclis i en les zones rurals, on no hi ha recursos necessaris per a crear museus reals i on



aquesta riquesa pot convertir-se en un important factor de desenvolupament del sector turístic i de la recuperació de la identitat cultural dels habitants.¹

Si ens remuntem als inicis de la idea d'interpretació, trobem les definicions de Tilden,² que aplica el concepte a la museografia d'Amèrica del Nord. Si analitzem la paraula "interpretar", procedent de *interpretare*, significa revelar el sentit de quelcom. No obstant, si considerem el mot "exposar", en llatí *exponere*, que s'empra en multituds d'ocasions en relació amb el patrimoni porta implícit l'acció de *presentar una matèria con claridad y método*.³ Tot i que ambdós termes poden semblar sinònims, en realitat no ho són. Si ens parem a pensar-ho, els aparadors, per exemple, exposen els productes, és a dir, els presenten al públic amb claredat i mètode. Però aquest concepte no és útil per a un museòleg i museògraf. El que es busca no és només exposar, mostrar per a mirar i contemplar, sinó ajudar a interpretar, és a dir, a revelar el seu sentit. De fet, la museologia i la museografia tenen com a objectiu ambdues coses: presentar una matèria amb claredat i mètode i, a la vegada, descobrir el seu sentit. Cal tenir en compte que una cosa és presentar, mostrar, exhibir quelcom, i l'altra, molt diferent, revelar el seu sentit: aquell sentit evident i ocult. El que va tenir en el seu origen i el que té en el moment actual.

"Interpretar" és un terme que no li interessa ni al publicista ni al dissenyador ni al qui munta els aparador. És per aquesta raó que el propi Tilden defineix el concepte així: *Interpretar es lo equivalente a lo que se ve y se experimenta*.⁴ En la mateixa línia, Ham i Morales coincideixen que la interpretació efectiva és un procés creatiu de comunicació estratègica, que produeix connexions intel·lectuals i emocionals entre el visitant i el recurs interpretat, arribant a generar els seus propis significats sobre el mateix recurs perquè s'apreciï i es gaudeixi.⁵ De fet, si ens remuntem a les teories constructivistes de l'aprenentatge significatiu, que plantegen Ausubel, Novak y Hanesian, l'aprenentatge no depèn d'un mètode en concret sinó que la informació presentada tingui un pont cognitiu possible amb el que l'espectador té prèviament.⁶ Seguint aquest principi, es pot fer una reflexió sobre en quin moment es considera que el missatge que es dona des de l'element patrimonial és interpretatiu i efectiu. Es busca que el missatge identifiqui amb claredat les característiques físiques de l'element patrimonial, relacionant les idees abstractes amb aquelles característiques físiques de l'element, en definitiva, amb quelcom concret perquè el visitant ho pugui identificar.

De la mateixa manera, i vinculat amb el punt anterior, el missatge ha d'estar relacionat amb idees intangibles però que lliguin amb conceptes universals perquè el visitant no es trobi perdut. Tot això provoca en el públic connexions intel·lectuals i també emocionals per a originar un pensament profund i que això generi un profund respecte, contribuint a la salvaguarda del recurs patrimonial. Segons Sam Ham i citant l'axioma proposat per un guardabosc anònim del Servei de

1. *Interpretar el patrimoni, Guia bàsica*. Barcelona: Diputació de Barcelona, 2006: 43-44 (Basat en el Projecte HICIRA, 2004).

2. A la seva obra: Tilden, Freeman. *Interpreting our Heritage*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977. Traduïda com: Tilden, Freeman. *La interpretación de nuestro patrimonio*. Pamplona: Asociación para la Interpretación del patrimonio, 2006.

3. "presentar una matèria amb claredat i mètode". Miguel, Raimundo de. *Nuevo diccionario latino-español etimológico*. Madrid: J.M. Bosch Editor, 1867: 356.

4. "Interpretar és l'equivalent al que es veu i s'experimenta". Tilden, Freeman. *La interpretación de nuestro patrimonio...*: 25.

5. Morales, Jorge; Ham, Sam. "¿A qué interpretación nos referimos?". *Boletín de Interpretación*, 19 (2008): 4-7.

6. Ausubel, David Paul; Novak, Joseph; Hanesian, Helen. *Psicología educativa: un punto de vista cognoscitivo*. Mèxic D.F.: Trillas, 1997.

Parcs d'EEUU (recollit en un manual administratiu) cal pensar que *Por la interpretación, comprensión, por el entendimiento estima; por la estima, protección*.⁷

També s'ha de tenir en compte que, a banda dels missatges que es fan arribar a l'espectador, el procés d'interpretació no ha d'oblidar que cada objecte patrimonial està dotat d'un triple significat per a poder crear un bon element d'interpretació. En primer lloc, el significat funcional, que és aquell que respon al què i al com s'utilitza. Per una altra banda, el significat simbòlic, que respon a la pregunta de quin valor té per a mi, per a la societat. I per últim, el significat contextual, que respon a quin escenari el trobem i en quina situació. Per tant, per a descodificar el significat de qualsevol element patrimonial sorgeixen diferents preguntes, que ens condueixen a desvetllar el triple significat al que hem fet al·lusió i a intervenir en conseqüència.⁸ Posem un exemple concret: si ens trobem en el claustre del Monestir de Sant Benet de Bages, davant dels capitells que s'estenen per les galeries dels claustres, ens podem preguntar quin és el significat funcional del capitell. Està clar que parlem d'un element arquitectònic que es situa en l'extrem superior d'una columna per a recollir les carregues de l'arc o del sostre i portar la càrrega cap a les columnes. Però a part, d'aquesta funció estructural, també té un clar significat simbòlic. Si ens remuntem a l'Edat mitjana, el capitell era utilitzat com un instrument didàctic. En molts casos, es representaven escenes figuratives amb aspectes simbòlics referides a personatges bíblics. A més, aquest tipus de capitells també tenen un significat contextual que respon a una sèrie de característiques inscrites en l'època del romànic. Tenint en compte el missatge i els tres nivells de l'element patrimonial, i si recuperem tot el que hem dit sobre interpretació, podem definir que entenem per centre d'interpretació *un equipamiento situado en un edificio cerrado o a cielo abierto que normalmente no dispone de objetos originales y que tiene por objetivo revelar el sentido evidente u oculto de aquello que se pretende interpretar*.⁹

En definitiva, conscients de que es tracta d'equipaments amb una indefinició de base, exposem a continuació un decàleg¹⁰ imprescindible per a tots aquells centre que busquin ser eficaços en els objectius primigenis plantejats. La base teòrica subjacent per a la generació d'aquests ítems ha estat l'anàlisi previ dels principals centres d'interpretació i les dimensions més comunament incloses:

1. *Relaciona el objeto a interpretar con las ideas previas del usuario.*
2. *Su objetivo es instruir, emocionar, provocar, o desencadenar ideas.*
3. *Tiene en cuenta los segmentos de edad de los visitantes.*
4. *Tiene presente que interpretar no es tan solo informar.*
5. *Organiza jerárquicamente los contenidos.*
6. *Selecciona conceptos relevantes.*
7. *Contiene elementos lúdicos.*
8. *Utiliza recursos museográficos diversos.*
9. *Concibe la interpretación com un hecho global y no parcial.*

7. "Per a la interpretació, comprensió, per a l'enteniment estima; per a l'estima, protección". Ham, Sam. "De la Interpretación a la Protección ¿Hay una base teórica?". *Boletín de Interpretación*, 18 (2008): 27-31.

8. Martín, Carolina. *Estudio analítico descriptivo de los centros de interpretación patrimonial en España*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona (tesis doctoral), 2011.

9. "aquell equipament situat en un edifici tancat o a cel obert, que normalment no disposa d'objectes originals i que té per objectiu revelar el sentit evident o ocult d'allò que es pretén interpretar". Martín, Carolina. *Estudio analítico descriptivo...*: 36.

10. Martín, Carolina. *Manual del centro de interpretación*. Gijón: Trea, 2013.



10. *Interpreta objetos patrimoniales sin la necesidad de que los contenga.*¹¹

Aquest decàleg sobre el que fonamentar un centre d'interpretació per a que sigui eficaç conceptualment ha de ser complementat per d'altres conceptes que estan en un estadi menys educatiu però no cal oblidar com ara la planificació o els recursos humans.

2. Metodologia

Per a dur a terme la present recerca s'ha realitzat en un primer moment un procés d'estudi exploratori i d'anàlisi dels centres d'interpretació que centren la seva temàtica en el romànic dins del territori espanyol. Les observacions s'han realitzat *in situ* a través d'una taula de recollida de dades creada a partir del decàleg presentat en el punt anterior. Posteriorment, els resultats indiquen que un dels models aconsegueix els deu punts. És per aquesta raó que aquest centre s'ha estudiat en profunditat per poder ser validat com a model, basant-nos en el mètode de l'estudi de cas. D'aquesta manera s'ha pogut aprofundir en qüestions que responen majoritàriament a preguntes que pivoten sobre el com es du a terme i amb quines eines. La voluntat de l'estudi és d'una perspectiva integradora i per tant, com apunta Yin es tracta de que tinguem present que *Investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.*¹²

3. Anàlisi per a la selecció del model

La gran diversitat resultant de la proliferació descontrolada de creació de centres d'interpretació en aquests darrers vint anys implica la necessitat de traçar un model educatiu eficaç. Si l'objectiu que es persegueix amb la seva creació és ensenyar mitjançant el patrimoni, és lògic plantejar models d'intervenció bàsicament educatius. Però per a poder desenvolupar un dels centres com a model, cal analitzar aquells ja implementats. Per a fer-ho, s'ha creat un instrument de valoració i recollida de dades que es configura a partir dels deu ítems presentats anteriorment; una fitxa tècnica que parteix d'un disseny descriptiu i seccional. Els indicadors s'estructuren en cinc categories, en funció si es refereixen als continguts (categoria 1), a la interpretació que es desenvolupa en l'interior del centre (categoria 2), als visitants (categoria 3), als elements d'intermediació (categoria 4) i als elements patrimonials (categoria 5). En referència als ítems de continguts s'han estructurat en relació amb les idees prèvies de l'usuari, a la jerarquia i a la rellevància dels continguts tractats. Sobre el concepte d'interpretació els ítems que s'analitzen pivoten sobre si es concep com un fet global, no només informatiu i que relaciona amb les idees prèvies de l'usuari. Respecte als usuaris s'ha tingut en compte si es considera el segment d'edat a qui va dirigit. En relació a l'ítem dels elements de museografia i didàctica s'ha tingut en compte si hi ha diversificació en la tipologia de

11. "1. Relaciona l'objecte a interpretar amb les idees prèvies de l'usuari. 2. El seu objectiu és instruir, emocionar, provocar o desencadenar idees. 3. Té en compte els segments d'edat dels visitants. 4. Té present que interpretar no és només informar. 5. Organitza jeràrquicament els continguts. 6. Selecciona conceptes rellevants. 7. Conté elements lúdics. 8. Utilitza recursos museogràfics diversos. 9. Concep la interpretació com un fet global i no parcial. 10. Interpreta els objectes patrimonials sense la necessitat de contenir-los al seu interior". Martín, Carolina. *Estudio analítico descriptivo...*: 37.

12. "Investigar un fenómeno contemporáneo dentro de su contexto de la vida real, especialmente cuando los límites entre el fenómeno y su contexto no son claramente evidentes". Yin, Robert K. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994: 13.

museografia així com de si empra la lúdica en els seus plantejaments. Finalment s'ha considerat la relació amb el patrimoni que interpreta.

La mostra està composta per aquells centres d'interpretació de temàtiques associades a l'àmbit del romànic, centrant-nos especialment en aquells que el concepte apareix en la nomenclatura del centre. La selecció ve en funció de la disponibilitat d'accés en el període temporal treballat (2015-2016). En total deu centres d'interpretació complien el criteri mencionats i és evident que estan associades a les províncies que tenen més mostres del patrimoni romànic.

Els resultats de l'estudi també obeeixen a una anàlisi previ en profunditat que no es presenta en el present article.¹³ Dels 10 centres analitzats només un complia la totalitat dels ítems, seguit de dos centres que compleixen vuit ítems i dos més que sis respectivament. En termes generals podem dir que la meitat dels centres d'interpretació compleixen cinc o menys ítems dels plantejats. També destaquen negativament dos dels ítems menys aconseguits per la majoria dels centres, ens referim al fet de tenir en compte els segments d'edat dels visitants així com al fet de que el seu objectiu sigui instruir, emocionar, provocar o desencadenar idees. En termes generals, tots els centres tenen en compte que no cal contenir en el seu interior els objectes patrimonials per a poder-los interpretar així com la selecció de conceptes rellevants.

Com s'ha apuntat anteriorment, el primer anàlisi ha fet evident l'únic centre que pot esdevenir com a model, en el sentit de representació i com a adjectiu que ens transporta a la noció de "ideal". El que es busca analitzant el model és una representació idealitzada de la realitat per mostrar algunes de les seves principals i significatives característiques. Aquesta necessitat davant la realitat complexa del fenomen el simplifica per a comprendre'l més fàcilment, ja que en l'acte educatiu que intervé en els centres d'interpretació conflueixen factors molt diversos.

4. L'estudi de cas com a model: el Centre d'interpretació del romànic de la vall de Boí

Sovint trobem equipaments culturals en espais patrimonials d'escàs valor on la seva funció és difícil i els visitants són escassos. No és el cas del conjunt romànic de la Vall de Boí,¹⁴ una de les peces claus, que formen part de la Llista del Patrimoni Mundial,¹⁵ amb una gran aflluència tant

13. Es fa referència a: Martín, Carolina. *Estudio analítico descriptivo*....

14. El conjunt està format per les esglésies de Sant Climent i Santa Maria de Taüll, Sant Joan de Boí, Santa Eulàlia d'Erill la Vall, Sant Feliu de Barruera, la Nativitat de Durro, Santa Maria de Cardet, l'Assumpció de Coll i l'ermita de Sant Quiric de Durro i va ser reconegut per part del Comitè del Patrimoni Mundial de la UNESCO el 30 de novembre de l'any 2000. Extret de UNESCO. "World Heritage Committee Inscribes 61 New Sites on World Heritage List". 30 novembre 2000, UNESCO. 27 setembre 2015 <<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/184/>>.

15. Per formar part de la Llista del Patrimoni Mundial, els béns, culturals o naturals han de tenir un valor universal excepcional i satisfer, al menys, un dels deu criteris de selecció següents:

1. *Represent a masterpiece of human creative genius*
2. *Exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design*
3. *Bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared*
4. *Be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history*
5. *Be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change*
6. *Be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance*
7. *Contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance*



de visitants interessats pel patrimoni cultural com pel natural.¹⁶ Els antecedents del reconeixement del conjunt cal cercar-los al segle, dinou en el marc d'un seguit d'actuacions encaminades a salvar i a divulgar el patrimoni arqueològic i artístic català, que en aquells moments es trobava sota perill de desaparèixer i dispersar-se.¹⁷ Com sabem, la importància i la consciència del valor de l'art dels segles onze al tretze com a part de la història i la identitat del país ja és reconeguda a

8. *Be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features*
9. *Be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals*
10. *Contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.*

("I. Representar una obra mestra del geni creatiu humà. II. Ser la manifestació d'un intercanvi considerable de valors humans durant un període o una àrea cultural específica, en el desenvolupament de l'arquitectura o de la tecnologia, les arts monumentals, l'urbanisme dels pobles o el paisatge. III. Aportar un testimoni únic o almenys excepcional d'una tradició cultural o d'una civilització que sigui viva o que ja hagi desaparegut. IV. Ser un exemple destacat d'un tipus de construcció, d'un conjunt arquitectònic o tecnològic o d'un paisatge que il·lustri una o més etapes significatives de la història de la humanitat. V. Ser un exemple destacat d'assentament humà tradicional, de l'ús tradicional del territori o del mar, que sigui representatiu d'una cultura (o cultures) o de la interacció humana amb l'entorn, especialment quan aquest ha esdevingut vulnerable per l'impacte d'una transformació irreversible. VI. Estar directament o materialment associat a esdeveniments o tradicions vives, idees, creences o obres artístiques i literàries de significat universal excepcional. VII. Representar fenòmens naturals o espais d'una bellesa natural i d'una importància estètica excepcional. VIII. Ser exemples representatius de grans estadis de la història de la terra, inclòs el testimoni de la vida, de processos geològics en el decurs del desenvolupament de formes terrestres o d'elements geomòrfics o fisiogràfics rellevants. IX. Ser un exemple representatiu de processos ecològics i biològics en el decurs de l'evolució i el desenvolupament dels ecosistemes i comunitats de plantes i animals terrestres, aquàtiques, costaners o marins. X. Contenir els hàbitats naturals més representatius i més importants per la conservació in situ de la diversitat biològica, especialment aquells on sobreviuen les espècies amenaçades que tenen un valor universal excepcional des del punt de vista de la ciència o de la conservació").

Extret de UNESCO. "The Criteria for Selection". UNESCO. 27 setembre 2015 <<http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/>>. Cal tenir en compte també els dos criteris universals excepcionals sota els que les esglésies van passar a formar part de la Llista del Patrimoni Mundial:

Criterion (ii): The significant developments in Romanesque art and architecture in the churches of the Vall de Boí testify to profound cultural interchange across medieval Europe, and in particular across the mountain barrier of the Pyrenees.

Criterion (iv): The Churches of the Vall de Boí are an especially pure and consistent example of Romanesque art in a virtually untouched rural setting.

("Criteri (ii): L'important desenvolupament de l'art i de l'arquitectura romànica de les esglésies de la Vall de Boí és el testimoni dels profunds intercanvis interculturals a l'Europa medieval i en particular a través de la barrera muntanyosa dels Pirineus. Criteri (iv): Les esglésies de la Vall de Boí són un exemple particularment pur i homogeni de l'art romànic en un paisatge rural mantingut pràcticament intacte").

Extret de UNESCO. "Catalan Romanesque Churches of the Vall de Boí". UNESCO. 27 setembre 2015 <<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/988/>>.

16. Des de l'oficina que gestiona el patrimoni del romànic de Boí, a Erill la Vall, expliquen que predomina el turisme familiar d'arreu de Catalunya, tot i que també ha entrat amb força aquests anys els procedents d'altres indrets d'Europa, sobretot francesos, holandesos, italians i espanyols. Els visitants solen compaginar la ruta del romànic amb el turisme de natura (el Parc Nacional d'Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici té una de les dues entrades a la Vall de Boí, una porta d'accés per on passen anualment uns 240.000 excursionistes) i l'estació d'esquí Boí Taüll Resort, en funcionament des de l'any 1998. Així el creixement turístic de la vall dels últims deu anys no es pot atribuir en exclusiva a la declaració del romànic del patrimoni de la Humanitat però l'alcalde del municipi de la Vall de Boí està convençut que el turisme cultural ha contribuït a trencar l'estacionalitat; a fer emergir durant aquests anys quatre petits hotels i cases de turisme rural i cinc nous restaurants, i a reformar i millorar els que ja existien. Centre del Romànic de la Vall de Boí. "Protecció i reconeixement". *Centre del Romànic de la Vall de Boí*. 27 setembre 2015 <<http://www.centreromantic.com/ca/protecció-i-reconeixement>>.

17. No hem d'oblidar que les esglésies de Sant Climent i Santa Maria de Taüll varen ser les primeres en rebre el reconeixement institucional al 1931 en ser declarades *Monumento Histórico Artístico*. No va ser fins a l'any 1962 quan la declaració es fa extensiva també a les esglésies de Sant Joan de Boí i de Santa Eulàlia d'Erill la Vall. A inicis dels anys noranta del segle XX va ser quan la Generalitat de Catalunya declara Bé d'Interès Cultural a tot el conjunt de les esglésies de la Vall de Boí, engenant dos anys després el seu programa de restauració de les mateixes. Centre del Romànic de la Vall de Boí. "Protecció i reconeixement". *Centre del Romànic de la Vall de Boí*. 27 setembre 2015 <<http://www.centreromantic.com/ca/protecció-i-reconeixement>>.

nivell internacional des de les primeres dècades del segle vint.¹⁸ Estudis i monografies a càrrec de destacats personatges de la burgesia industrial són eines amb les que s'ajuda a la valorització del patrimoni medieval català.¹⁹ De fet, l'interès per la recuperació es va potenciar de la mà de personalitats com Puig i Cadafalch, Domènech i Montaner,²⁰ Gudiol i Cunill o Folch i Torres, sota les fórmules d'agrupacions com entitats i associacions (com el Centre Excursionista de Catalunya o Associació Catalanista d'Excursions Científiques).

Un dels moments claus per a la valorització d'aquest patrimoni passa l'any 1907,²¹ quan el fotògraf Mas, Puig i Cadafalch i Gudiol i Cunill van emprendre la Missió Arqueològica-Jurídica a la ratlla d'Aragó, la primera expedició organitzada per l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans.²² Aquest fet va suposar la seva expansió pel món, tot i que a la vegada va ser un dels instruments que va despertar la cobdícia per part dels col·leccionistes d'art internacionals.²³ En realitat, després de les diferents etapes per les que ha passat el patrimoni de la vall, es converteix en una peça estratègica per a poder donar a conèixer i entendre el món de l'art romànic. Aquest fet també comporta unes responsabilitats, assumides actualment pel Consorci Patrimoni Mundial de la Vall de Boí,²⁴ entre la que trobem la creació al 2007²⁵ d'un equipament interactiu i didàctic.²⁶

L'equipament, ubicat a Erill la Vall, té un doble objectiu; acollir el flux de visitants que desitgen veure les esglésies, (ja que interpreta el patrimoni però no el conté) i a la vegada dotar-lo d'eines interpretatives per estimular el recorregut del turista cultural al llarg i ample d'aquest petit territori. Es perseguia solucionar un dels dèficits d'abans de la intervenció, provocat pel fet que quan es realitzaven les visites a les esglésies només estaven dotades d'alguns elements d'intermediació, com faristols interpretatius o fullets informatius que s'entregaven amb les entrades,²⁷ i que convertia al visitant i els seus coneixements previs en els únics responsable d'aconseguir interpretar l'espai patrimonial.

La proposta està sustentada en dues grans qüestions que sorgeixen de la selecció de conceptes rellevants, de la voluntat de crear jerarquia en els continguts relacionant-ho amb les idees prèvies de l'usuari; la primera, com és que es conserva aquest testimoni d'un període tant concret de la

18. Carbonell, Eduard. *Guia art romànic*. Barcelona: Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, 2002.

19. Trepat, Cristòfol A. *L'Art romànic*. Barcelona: Editorial Barcanova, 1993.

20. Granell, Enric; Ramon, Antoni. *Lluís Domènech i Montaner, Viatges per l'arquitectura romànica*. Barcelona: Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya, 2006.

21. La novel·la històrica també és una bona fórmula per la difusió del coneixement d'èpoques històriques. En aquest cas la novel·la de Martí Gironell (Gironell, Martí. *Strappo, l'espòli del romànic català*. Barcelona: Ediciones B, 2015) es començà a gestar arrel d'una exposició que es celebrà en el Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC) sobre el romànic, a partir de la fascinació de l'autor vers la història que hi havia darrera de les pintures de Santa Maria de Mur que van acabar en el Museu de Belles Arts de Boston, un dels exemples més paradigmàtics de l'espòli de l'art del Pirineu i detonant de les campanyes posteriors per a salvaguardar les pintures romàniques.

22. Aquesta iniciativa és una de les que es considera més destacades, ja que a partir d'aquest moment van ser molt importants les publicacions en fascicles aparegudes sobre la col·lecció Pintures murals catalanes, amb il·lustracions de les pintures murals més destacades.

23. Camps, Jordi; Pagès, Montserrat. *Guia Visual Art Romànic*. Barcelona: Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, 2002.

24. Constituit per l'Ajuntament de la Vall de Boí, el Consell Comarcal de l'Alta Ribagorça, la Diputació de Lleida, la Generalitat de Catalunya i els bisbats de Lleida i Urgell.

25. Castellà, Cristina; Grifoll, Laia. "El conjunto románico del valle de Boí: patrimonio mundial en un entorno rural". *Hermes*, 1 (2009): 99-108.

26. Tomasa, Eudald; Serra, Rosa. "La museografía audiovisual e hipermedia y sus aplicaciones en el monasterio de Sant Benet de Bages (Barcelona)". *Hermes*, 1 (2009): 21-29.

27. Castellà, Cristina; Grifoll, Laia. "El conjunto románico del valle de Boí...": 99-108.



història? i en quines circumstàncies històriques i artístiques va sorgir? El projecte està concebut des de l'òptica de la didàctica lúdica, defugint del muntatge clàssic amb un sistema molt més dinàmic, tenint present que interpretar no és tan sols informar. Està basat en una estratègia molt participativa que no només propicia l'adquisició de coneixement i el desenvolupament d'activitats sinó que a més contribueix a la motivació per a la matèria objecte d'anàlisi; en realitat, aquestes estratègies constitueixen una forma de treball que proporciona una gran quantitat de procediments que simulen la presa de decisions.²⁸ En definitiva, s'ofereix un equipament pedagògic, amb l'objectiu d'instruir, emocionar, provocar o desencadenar idees.

Amb la seva anàlisi, podem veure com un dels objectius és que el centre sigui un motor de dinamització del patrimoni de la zona, i s'ha tingut en compte el fet que va dirigit a un públic ampli. En aquest cas, s'ha volgut fugir expressament d'aquells espais que semblen concebuts només pel públic escolar, per això tots els continguts han estat elaborats per a poder seguir la visita sense que calgui posseir uns prerequisits culturals i amb nivells que puguin satisfer des del públic més infantil al general, passant per col·lectius específics com els de la tercera edat, tenint molt en compte els segments d'edat dels visitants. La intervenció està basada en mecanismes que propicien l'interès pel coneixement, conceben la interpretació com un fet global i no parcial, i que són tres ingredients fonamentals idèntics als que regeixen la majoria de les nostres accions: atracció visual, estimulació sensitiva i plaer emocional. Sense aquests estímuls no existeix l'interès per a realitzar-se preguntes i, en conseqüència, l'interès per a conèixer les respostes.²⁹

A la vegada, aquests tres axiomes s'apliquen per a treballar els continguts que ofereix el centre i que es basen en primer lloc en aprendre que les pintures, les escultures i l'arquitectura de l'època romànica es poden emprar com a font primària per a conèixer l'època medieval de primera mà. A la vegada, ens serveixen per obtenir informació històrica i social a partir de la seva anàlisi iconologia i iconogràfica, tant dels personatges de l'època com de les relacions que es desenvolupaven entre ells. De la mateixa manera, s'analitzen les fonts iconogràfiques de l'època amb l'ajut de fonts primàries com la Bíblia, el bestiar, el fisiòleg o la llegenda daurada.

5. Bases de l'anàlisi de la museografia del Centre d'Interpretació

En aquest apartat de l'anàlisi, s'estudia amb profunditat la museografia del centre i si utilitza recursos museogràfics diversos i elements lúdics com a eina principal per a la interpretació del patrimoni. Aquesta està concebuda a través d'un format simple, on les propostes audiovisuals i interactives dominen l'espai, reduint els textos dels panells, facilitant la comunicació i fent-la més eficaç. Tot l'espai museogràfic està dotat de botoneres associades a cada element museogràfic perquè els visitants puguin escollir entre quatre idiomes: anglès, francès, espanyol i català.

En realitat, aquest equipament està conceptualitzat com una instal·lació interactiva total³⁰ en què la seva principal preocupació és que el visitant pugui descarregar adrenalina experimentant amb processos o seqüències de forma continuada. Aquesta tipologia d'espais culturals es defineixen com equipaments de caràcter lúdico-científic i pretenen arribar a un públic d'ampli espectre,

28. Santacana, Joan; Llonch, Nayra. *Manual de didàctica del objecte en el museu*. Gijón: Trea, 2012.

29. Batista, Ricardo. "Diseñando centros de interpretación. De la idea al resultado, un proceso lleno de seducciones". *Her@Mus: heritage & museography*, 2/2 (2010): 88-93.

30. Alcalde, Jaume; Martínez, César. "Interactividad para nadie en general y para todos en particular: hacia una interactividad total". *Her@Mus: heritage & museography*, 2/2 (2010): 15-19.

des d'escolars fins a especialistes, a través de la seva intensitat interactiva. El caràcter lúdic, irremediablement atractiu per als més joves, no està renyit amb un rigor científic en els seus plantejaments; i és precisament aquest últim element el que captiva als especialistes.³¹ Com a resultats de l'observació es percep que en el plantejament del CRVB s'ha buscat un rigor científic amb especial incidència en els mètodes de treball, en les tècniques i, en general, en tot allò que respongui a mètodes d'investigació hipotètic deductius.³²

Des d'un punt de vista formal, l'espai del centre s'estructura al voltant de mòduls, que tot i que segueixen un guió clar, resulten independents en la seva manipulació i funcionament. El visitant és qui regula el temps de dedicació a cada un d'ells. Sovint pot dedicar molt de temps a un sol mòdul que li interessi especialment.³³ S'observa com els elements funcionals s'han prioritzat sobre els de disseny, per tal que siguin mòduls resistents i que puguin ser manipulats fàcilment, afavorint així la interacció directa sense problemes.

La proposta museogràfica està ambientada amb uns grans llibres sobredimensionats que envolten el visitant, metàfora que iguala el patrimoni artístic romànic a "un llibre obert" però que només podem saber interpretar i llegir correctament amb el descodificador adient.

L'estudi del CRVB mostra com el seu disseny facilita un tipus de visita lliure, és a dir, no es tracta d'un recorregut prefixat o lineal; principalment perquè l'experiència demostra que són recorreguts avorrits per a la majoria dels visitants i que creen desmotivació.

Amb l'anàlisi, veiem que s'incideix en com aprenen els visitants, i s'han aplicat models teòrics que basen la concepció del procés d'ensenyament i aprenentatge amb una relació interactiva que s'estableix entre el material i l'usuari. D'entre els models emprats en el centre, destaquen els models socials i els models de procediment de la informació. El primer s'estableix normalment a través d'un grup social i està basat en models d'estratègies de participació on destaquen l'aprenentatge i la interactivitat. Per altra banda, existeixen els models d'aprenentatge i processament de la informació, basats en el constructivisme o l'aprenentatge per descobriment, que sol donar-se per processos d'aprenentatge individuals.

Centrant-nos pròpiament en el recorregut, s'inicia en la zona central de recepció que té com a funció rebre al visitant. Aquí es situa el mostrador de venda de productes relacionats amb el romànic i la zona. També és l'espai que es proporciona al visitant tota la informació pràctica, a mode de *Visitor's Center*. A cada costat (esquerra i dreta) d'aquest espai central de recepció trobem dues sales on es desenvolupen els diferents espais interpretatius. A la dreta hi ha el primer espai interpretatiu, anomenat "Fa mil anys, quan la vall es va obrir al món". Aquest espai, de llenguatge fonamentalment audiovisual, comença amb un espectacle de vídeo, llum i so que transporta al visitant a les coordenades històriques del romànic de la Vall de Boí, entorn de l'any 1000. Es tracta d'un audiovisual que es complementa amb elements escenogràfics amagats, que es descobreixen amb jocs de llums al llarg de la projecció.

La capçalera de la sala té una pantalla de projecció de material que es transparenta mitjançant modificacions de la intensitat lumínica dels focus, col·locats a banda i banda de la mateixa. Darrera aquesta pantalla i a l'interior de les caixes de llum, hi ha col·locades escenografies diverses que

31. Martín, Carolina; Castells, Júlia. "Análisis y clasificación de los modelos interactivos", *Manual de Museografía Interactiva*, Joan Santacana, Carolina Martín, coords. Gijón: Trea. 2010: 87-335.

32. Santacana, Joan; Llonch, Nayra. *Manual de didáctica...*

33. Coma, Laia; Sallés, Neus. "Recursos y materiales didácticos interactivos", *Manual de Museografía Interactiva*, Joan Santacana, Carolina Martín, coords. Gijón: Trea. 2010: 415-462.



només es fan visibles quan s'activa el sistema de retro-il·luminació interior amb elements contextualitzadors com la cadira de Sant Pere, pergamins papals amb segells, frontal mig construïts, un bodegó de taula amb colorants amb pinzells i guix...

En aquest espai, amb una capacitat de 50 persones aproximadament, es busca que el visitant es submergeixi en el romànic, sense grans paraules tècniques. Seguint l'anàlisi, veiem com a la part esquerra trobem el que es considera l'espai interpretatiu específic. Al tractar-se d'un espai alt, diàfan i relativament petit la distribució interior dels mòduls es realitzà per a que no fes compartimentacions minúscules que trencarien la unitat de l'espai. Per aquest motiu els mòduls es troben tancats dins d'espais relativament baixos que permeten veure el sostre i que no trenquen la unitat de l'espai. Podem observar com la proposta de tot aquest espai interpretatiu es basa en el concepte d'*scriptorium*, és a dir, d'un conjunt de llibres manuscrits i miniats. És ben sabut que provinents de terres catalanes hi ha un bon conjunt de llibres que es van il·luminar en alguns dels grans centres de producció del país, el Missal d'Arles, el Beatus de Torí, el de Girona, l'Homiliari de Beda, La Bíblia de Ripoll, la de Rodes, el Beatus de la Seu d'Urgell, etc. També sabem que molta de la iconografia romànica s'inspirava en aquestes miniatures.³⁴ La sala apareix a ulls dels visitants com un conjunt de grans llibres, de mides gegants, col·locats desordenadament. Els llibres de gran format, amb l'aparença de grans còdex miniats medievals, configuren quatre espais expositius un xic amagats imperceptibles a primer cop d'ull. En realitat es busca que el visitant es trobi immers dins d'un espai desconegut, com una gran biblioteca de la que sols hi ha quatre llibres visibles. En cada un dels llibres —que constitueixen un subespai dins de la sala— se li explica una part de la Història vinculada amb aquella època de destacada importància per les esglésies (tant en el passat medieval com a l'inici del segle vint).

Els resultats de l'anàlisi mostren que en tot el centre es treballen les fonts primàries, tant textuals com iconogràfiques, ja que són considerades les més interessants des del punt de vista metodològic per introduir a l'estudiant en la lògica científica de la història. Es tracta d'enfrontar a l'individu amb una sèrie d'objectes, restes o escrits per a que sigui capaç d'extreure la màxima informació històrica, per a resoldre un determinat problema o qüestió. Es busca treballar amb fonts primàries perquè el visitant pugui distingir també en la seva vida quotidiana entre opinions fonamentades entre opinions fonamentades en l'experiència directa i d'altres reelaborades a partir de visions allunyades o tòpiques. Es tracta d'una mirada polièdrica amb la finalitat de prospectar totes les informacions que li siguin possibles.³⁵ També s'ha tingut en compte la manca d'espais a l'abast del públic i accessibles que treballin a través de les fonts primàries i secundàries. Per això s'ha volgut que dins de l'espai interpretatiu del romànic s'emprin les fonts primàries textuals que ens remeten de manera directe al passat, com element primordial per atorgar informació sobre el passat. És el cas del primer subàmbit que trobem anomenat *La Vall en el gresol de l'art*, que vol fer comprendre l'essència de l'art romànic de la vall. Planteja a més de la simbologia, com entre els segles VII-X, a l'Occident d'Europa hi ha un gran nombre d'estils que van entrar en conflicte i que es van anar conciliant a les darreries del període, sobre l'any mil. Mostra com durant aquest temps hi va haver persones, especialment en els monestirs i en els convents, que van estimar l'art de llegir i que van admirar les obres del món antic que s'havien conservat. Aquests clergues il·lustrats van ocupar llocs importants en les corts, dels comtes i dels senyors.

34. *Iniciación al arte románico*. Aguilar de Campoo: Fundación Santa María La Real, 2002.

35. Feliu, Maria; Hernández, Francesc X. *12 ideas clave Enseñar y aprender historia*. Barcelona: Graó, 2011.

Enmig de les piles de llibres, s'entra en un espai petit amb il·lustracions provinents del mon tardo romà i bizantí. Totes aquestes imatges es "fonen" en una de sola que ens proporciona l'estètica del romànic de la Vall de Boí. El missatge de l'espai és, doncs, el dels corrents artístics que conflueixen en el gresol del romànic com a primer gran art d'Occident. Tota aquesta informació es transmet a l'interior d'un recinte circular que representa un llibre de tipus romà tardà, és a dir un rotlle de gran format. Al centre del cercle hi trobem un faristol amb una pantalla tàctil interactiva que ens informa d'aquelles fonts primàries que van inspirar elements que avui formen part de les col·leccions romàniques del Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC) i que provenen de la Vall de Boí.

En el contingut del mòdul, els visitants poden buscar els fragments d'aquelles fonts (Antic Testament i Nou Testament) i d'altres fonts de l'època medieval i anteriors (els bestiaris, *Cathemerion* de Prudenci, els Evangelis Apòcrifs, el *Fisiòleg* atribuït a Melitó de Sardes, Pseudo-Dionís...) que utilitzaven per a il·lustrar les obres més representatives de les esglésies de la Vall de Boí. Els fidels que assistien a les esglésies, així com tots els habitants de l'època feudal sabien llegir i desxifrar aquests codis. El que es pretén amb el contingut d'aquesta pantalla tàctil és que el visitant pugui arribar a llegir entre línies iguals que es feia en època medieval.

El següent subàmbit observat, anomenat *La Vall de Boí*, entre el Pallars Jussà i el Pallars Sobirà es materialitza sobre un gran llibre obert, on es projecte a mode de crònica de l'època. En aquest mòdul es planteja com aquesta vall va estar a cavall de dos poders temporals, els comtes del Pallars Jussà i Sobirà, així com dels bisbats de Roda i d'Urgell. Pel seu guió s'ha utilitzat com a base un altre font primària, la Crònica d'Alaò (1154-finals del segle tretze). El visitant es troba un foli com si fos de la Bíblia de Ripoll, conservada a la Biblioteca Apostòlica del Vaticà;³⁶ el foli pertany al llibre II dels Macabeus. El cronista va agafant vida i ens explica a mode de relat, tot situant-nos en la social feudal típica de l'època, les disputes que es produïen entre el Pallars Jussà i el Pallars Sobirà.

Si comparem amb el següent subàmbit, veiem que està dissenyat a mode d'*scriptorium*. És l'anomenat *Les esglésies de la Vall de Boí: Les 9 pedres vives*. Dins d'aquest àmbit, el públic pot descobrir les particularitats dels nou temples de la vall en tres moments claus, la construcció, el redescobrimnt i la restauració de les mateixes.

Els diferents escriptoris mostren, a través de diferents recursos museogràfics com visors o calaixos retràctils interactius, informació relacionada amb els arrencaments de les pintures, l'arquitectura de les esglésies (amb les plantes, els alçats...), reproduccions dels materials i les eines utilitzades als tallers de pintors.

Finalment, ens trobem amb el punt culminant del Centre d'Interpretació, l'àmbit anomenat *Les veus de la vall*. Dins d'aquest espai s'amaga una rèplica del banc presbiterial de Sant Climent de Taüll (conservat al MNAC).³⁷ El banc és una metàfora de la societat de la Vall; moltes fustes per confluïr en un únic element. El banc es presenta despullat i aïllat, ja que en realitat actua com a suport on apareixen tres personatges claus per a la història de la Vall de Boí. Amb l'ambient adequat, hi apareixen tres figures fantasmagòriques a mode de testimonis en primera persona que ens relaten les seves vivències de temes relacionats amb la concepció i el retrobament de l'art romànic. Els tres guions dels personatges també estan basats en fonts primàries de cada una de les èpoques que

36. Biblioteca apostolica vaticana. Manoscritti Vaticani latini, 5729.

37. Camps, Jordi; Pagès, Montserrat. *Guia Visual Art Romànic...*



representa. La primera que trobem, la comtessa d'Erill (basats en textos de la comtessa Duoda³⁸ juntament amb relats de la comtessa d'Erill), ens explica l'encàrrec de les pintures a la vegada que, en el seu discurs fa paleses les preocupacions típiques de les dones de l'època i del seu estament. També hi trobem un clergue, estament social important a l'època medieval, que ens explica la societat del moment. Per últim, la figura de Puig i Cadafalch ofereix el relat del descobriment de les pintures, basat en els seus dietaris.

6. Conclusions

Amb aquest estudi s'ha tractat de donar eines per tal d'evitar la manca de planificació estratègica així com la falta de fonaments vers les característiques d'un centre eficaç. Ja hem vist que quan parlem de models que pretenen fomentar la interpretació del patrimoni és com si parléssim de quelcom que ajuda a traduir. Estem parlant de passar imatges, conceptes, missatges que van ser escrits en altres llenguatges en moments remots a un llenguatge conegut per a tothom. Aquesta tasca complexa l'ha de dur a terme un equip capaç de traduir la ciència a un llenguatge comprensible per als usuaris. Per a fer-ho, es requereixen habilitats i coneixements molt específics, i de la mateixa manera que no existeix un traductor automàtic i universal, tampoc existeix un didacta universal. Calen experts en les diverses disciplines (en la matèria i en didàctica) per tal de poder traduir —interpretar— correctament el patrimoni científic. Els experts han de ser capaços de seleccionar els conceptes rellevants i organitzar jeràrquicament els continguts, conceptualitzant elements museogràfics diversos, lúdics i didàctics, per a acostar-se al públic. Això implica ser un expert en didàctica, pedagogia i museografia.

En realitat, s'han de tenir en compte els interessos del públic, que són el centre de les actuacions ja que, en definitiva, el centre existeix perquè ells hi són. En la mesura que els equipaments culturals s'han convertit en espais educatius, on no es contempla, sinó que s'experimenta, es viuen emocions o s'aprèn, el públic passa a ocupar una nova centralitat. Cal, doncs, mantenir amb vida les propostes museogràfiques i museològiques que interessin i fugir d'aquelles que queden obsoletes o que no desperten interès més que als propis gestors de l'equipament.

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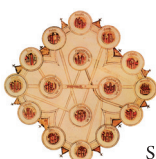
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